

# Chomsky: Nixon's Defenders Are Right

# (MORE)

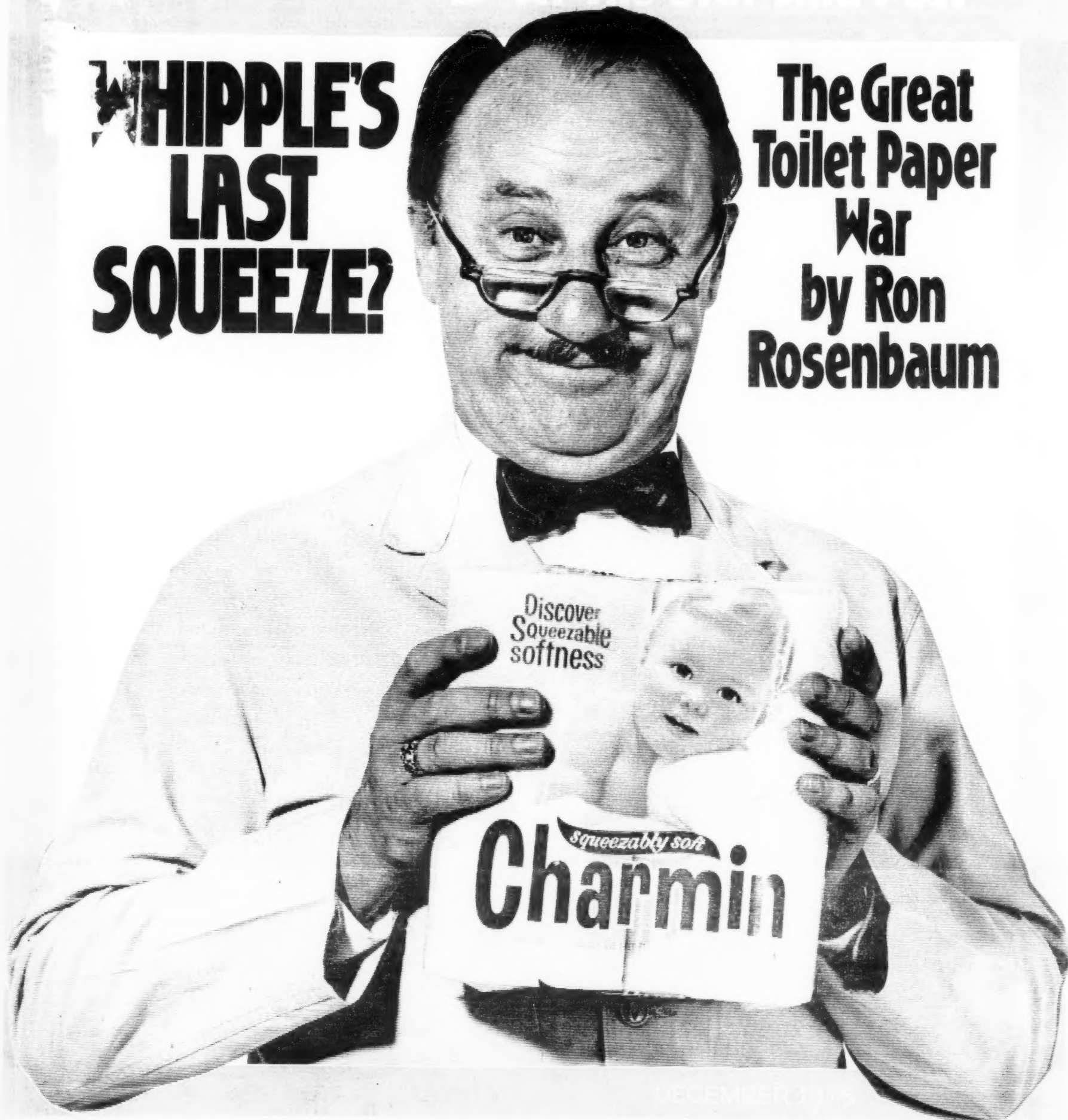
Schrag: Keene's Johnny  
And Merv, Mike and Kup

Cliches For Christmas

Turmoil In Washington  
At The Star And Post

## WHIPPLE'S LAST SQUEEZE?

## The Great Toilet Paper War by Ron Rosenbaum



DECEMBER 9, 1975

**[MORE]**

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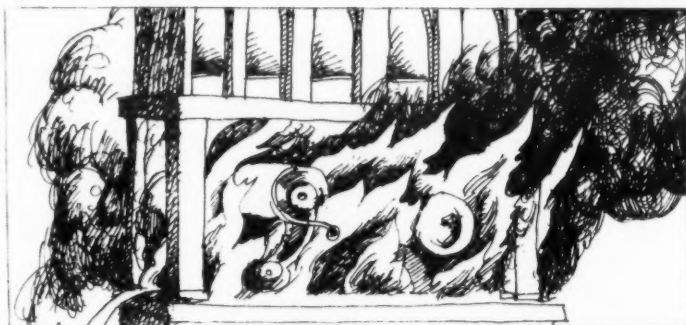
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by Ron Rosenbaum

George Whipple was born in a junior copywriter's cubicle more than a decade ago and, along with his Charmin-squeezing housewives, has become the star of one of the most successful and notorious commercials in television history. Now, however, Mr. Whipple's days may be numbered.

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A veteran labor reporter who has been on both sides of the bargaining table himself over the years explores the pressman's strike at *The Washington Post* and suggests that the vandalism and violence by the workers is not nearly as inexplicable as most accounts have made it seem.

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Texas millionaire Joe Allbritton is pouring millions into improving *The Washington Star*, but evening newspaper trends around the country and the demographics of the Washington area indicate that the paper may not be salvageable no matter how good it gets.

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"Media talk emits a sort of constant hum in which all things are more or less equal," writes contributing editor Schrag, who this month begins a regular monthly column on broadcasting.

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In comparison with the illegal harassment of U.S. citizens dating back to the Kennedy Administration, "Watergate was a tea party," argues the author, who charges that the liberal media still are looking the other way.

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**LETTERS****Half The Story**

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N.Y. Yanks	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

And that, Mr. Michael Harrington, is why the Poor are not news ["Meanwhile, in the Other America . . ."—November 1975]. They are only half the story, as surely as the above score is but half the score of a baseball game. The entire story is the maldistribution of wealth, and as soon as writers begin to write about that they will be producing something worth reading.

—J.W. Rockefeller, Jr.  
 Asbury Park, N.J.

**Clay Felker**

Credit Clay Felker with anything (chiefly with the concept and establishment of *New York*, still a major accomplishment in recent journalism)—but not, please, with making me "celebrated and powerful" or Jimmy Breslin "more famous" ["New York's Budding Beaverbrook"—October 1975]. His creatures surely include Jane O'Reilly, Peter Maas, Gail Sheehy, Gail Greene, and the "chic" Tom Wolfe, but Breslin and I (and the un-chic but remarkably gifted Wolfe) were creatures of the *Herald Tribune*: Breslin was a star columnist and I an award-winning reporter and film critic (with national stature via "Today" and *TV Guide*) long before *New York* was invented. The world did exist before Felker created *New York*—and the *New York Herald Tribune* was the father of us all.

Lest we forget.

—Judith Crist  
 New York, N.Y.

It is clearly on the record that as one of the original writers on *New York* I had a number of professional differences with Clay Felker. It is equally evident that as our separate careers have progressed, Felker doesn't need Maas and Maas doesn't need Felker.

So it is in that context that I write to express my dismay about the vicious, personal attack on Felker in what purports to be a serious review of contemporary journalism.

It is one thing to run a thoughtful, balanced critique of the sort, say, that David Halberstam did for [MORE] on [editor William] Shawn and *The New Yorker* a while back. ["Eustace Tilley Revisited"—April 1975]. It is quite another thing to carry on a cheap shot tradition that first cropped up in [MORE] about Sander Vanocur's demeanor in a restaurant. ["Do You Still See The Kennedys?"—February 1975].

—Peter Maas  
 New York, N.Y.

**Effete?**

Alexander Cockburn, in his article, "The Future Lies Ahead" [October 1975], compares the *Post's* "homely" lemon mousse to the *Times's* "effete" mousse au citron. Did Mr. Cockburn (or your copy editor) check the meaning of "effete" before it got into print? Has Mr. Cockburn ever written a second-day (or third-day, ad infinitum) lead? Is

Mr. Cockburn's contribution to the English language going to be "parafacts?" How inelegant.

—Irwin Schorr  
 Rockville, Md.

**'Noah Count'**

You never printed a truer word than your statement, attributed to the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs, that no Webster's dictionary is traceable to Daniel Webster [The Big Apple—October 1975]. On Noah count should any be so ascribed.

—Leon Lukaszewski  
 Los Angeles, Calif.

**See, e.g., Watergate**

I wonder what FCC David M. Rubin has in mind when he proposed full federal regulation of radio program formats and content [Furthermore—October 1975]. Surely not the one that took several decades just to decide whether a station in Albuquerque could share a nighttime frequency with a station in New York. Probably not the one that told WBAI-FM that playing a George Carlin record was not in the public interest. Hopefully not the one whose chairman "suggested" that the three television networks set aside a "family hour."

Specifically, I doubt that even men in Washington would be, or would care to be, aware of the subtle differences in music that mean something to an audience, if not to Rubin—the difference, say, between "progressive" rock and middle-of-the-road pop, or between traditional and modern country music. The proliferation of rock stations may offend Rubin; for rock fans, however, it has finally meant a reprieve from the tyranny of the top 30.

The FCC, as presently constituted, is simply not equipped to define, let alone enforce, a minimal standard of diversity in radio formats. These are people, after all, who listen to radio even less than do the general managers of radio stations. Having written and produced topical, satirical comedy programs for radio for nearly four years (with my colleagues in a group called The Credibility Gap), I've found that the FCC is far more often an excuse for keeping something off the air rather than a prod to increase program diversity. Drastically increasing the commission's power over programming would only increase this management fear factor geometrically.

It has been enough of a challenge to convince radio station management of the public's interest in programs that use comedy to make points about public affairs that may emerge in straight newscasts, if at all, years later (see, e.g., Watergate). I'd sure hate to have to make that case before seven Nixon and Ford appointees.

—Harry Shearer  
 Santa Monica, Calif.

**Long Distance Irony**

I have just read your article on the circuitous road to Hong Kong taken by Michael Casey and two reporters of *The Los Angeles Times* ["The Road To Hong Kong—August 1975]. Generally,



ally, I must commend its accuracy, understandable since it seems to have been drawn almost entirely from the article on the incident which appeared in the *Times* itself. May I, however, point out two factual errors? I imagine that a magazine that monitors the press presumably wishes to monitor its own accuracy as well.

Hong Kong Bureau Chief Elegant was not "seriously displeased with the incident," as you wrote. My sole role in the matter was to telephone Foreign Editor Robert Gibson when I picked up the local newspaper, *The South China Morning Post*, and found a story on *The Los Angeles Times*'s search for Patty Hearst splashed all over the front page. Neither Mr. Gibson nor I had been aware of the search in Hong Kong, since it was handled by a special task force. At no time did I telegraph, angrily or otherwise, regarding the fact that "the two were violating recent budget trimming policies." I work for the news side, not the business side, and my concern with the budget is limited to my own.

—Robert S. Elegant  
Hong Kong Bureau  
*The Los Angeles Times*  
Hong Kong

**Editor's reply:** Liza Bercovici, who wrote the article in question, reports that Robert Elegant's displeasure over the arrival of the *Times* Hearst Team was confirmed by three people at the paper, among them assistant city editor Lee Dye, who had overall charge of the team. One of her sources also confirmed the story for us. As for foreign editor Robert Gibson, he says simply that Elegant phoned him from Hong Kong to express "surprise" over the team's arrival and to note the "irony" of such an expense when the *Times* had just cut his bureau budget.

### Drug Advertising

Robert Fisher's recent story concerning Massachusetts Attorney General Francis X. Bellotti's attempts to ban over-the-counter drug advertising from television between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. [Hellbox—October 1975] contains a serious misrepresentation of the findings of an NBC study into the possible connection between children's exposure to television drug advertising and their subsequent use of drugs.

The story incorrectly states that the NBC study found "... that teenagers watching drug ads will probably abuse those drugs advertised, but will not necessarily abuse other, illicit drugs." I can't imagine whose interpretation that is, but if Mr. Fisher had bothered to check, he would have found no such conclusion in the NBC research. In fact, the research shows there is an extremely low probability that watching drug ads on TV will be associated with teenagers' use, let alone "abuse," of advertised drugs. And the report is careful to point out reasons why there may be no causal connection between exposure to advertising and use of proprietary drugs at all. It is even more puzzling that Mr. Fisher reported that "the Bellotti camp values it (the study) highly," inasmuch as one of the major findings of the NBC study is that the greater the exposure to proprietary drug commercials on television, the less are illicit drugs used.

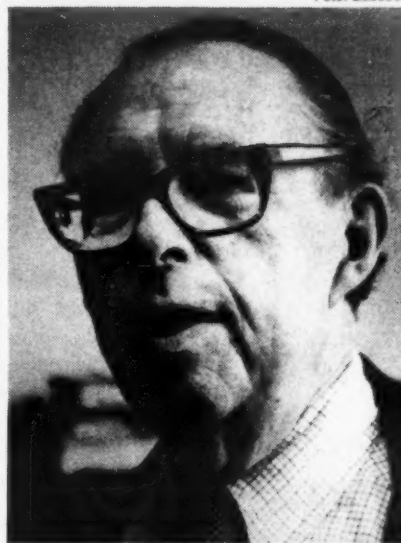
Had Mr. Fisher bothered to check with NBC, I would have been happy to discuss the study and its implications

(continued on page 29)

# ROSEBUDS

## Always Several Political Steps Ahead

Peter Babcock



**R**OSEBUDS to Carey McWilliams, who retires this month after 20 years of editing *The Nation*. In 1951, as McWilliams tells it, "we were living in our ramshackle old California redwood bungalow on a half-acre lot, complete with avocado, lemon and eucalyptus trees, high on a hilltop overlooking downtown and central Los Angeles." He was a migrant from Colorado ranching country (his family a victim of the post-World War I collapse of the cattle market), had become a lawyer, then California Commissioner of Housing and Immigration in the late thirties. He was the author of ten books, including *Factories in the Field*, a non-fiction counterpart of *The Grapes of Wrath*, and works on race prejudice (*Brothers Under the Skin*) and civil liberties (*Witchhunt*).

He had written often for *The Nation*, and now its editor, Freda Kirchwey, invited him to New York, with repression at its height (Hiss in prison, the Rosenbergs just sentenced to death, the Smith Act dragnet out, the House Un-American Activities Committee and Joe McCarthy on the loose) to help plan a special civil liberties issue. He stayed to join the staff, and in 1955 became editor. "On balance, I am not at all sorry I deserted the hilltop house in L.A. . . ."

On balance, America itself has no cause to be sorry. Carey McWilliams, taking charge of the country's oldest periodical (its first issue was July 6, 1865) did more than maintain its plain look, its unpurchasable political independence. During the most tumultuous 20 years of American history, when the government was at its most bullying at home and abroad, through red-scares, race rebellion, cold war, shooting-bombing war, and the frightening accumulation of atomic weapons, he kept *The Nation*'s voice clear and compelling, its mood indignant, its content devastatingly factual.

On becoming editor, he explained why *The Nation* was sorely needed: In the previous forty years, a third of the country's dailies and 3,000 of its weeklies had disappeared. There were no competing newspapers in 94 cities. Radio was dominated by four networks, half of whose income was accounted for by less than two dozen advertisers.

From 1955 to 1975, that process of consolidating control of information intensified. Television, dominated by a few networks and rich corporate advertisers, spent billions and made billions to keep the public uninformed, misinformed, numbed and bewildered. The effect of our controlled mass culture is, in Herbert Marcuse's words, "the atrophy of the mental organs for grasping the contradictions and the alternatives." Against this, *The Nation* and a few other stubborn publications, Carey McWilliams, I.F. Stone and a handful of other journalists, kept the conscience of America alive, by persistently noting "the contradictions." As for "the alternatives," we still lack an effective radical periodical with utopian visions and practical proposals, although *Liber-*

*ation* and *Working Papers* are trying.

*The Nation* is often lumped with *The New Republic*. They look alike, but differ in two ways. First, *The Nation* does more long-range analysis. Second, *The New Republic*, jogging around the circle of the Washington Establishment (whether Democrat or Republican), is too often enticed inside, leaving its spikes on the marble steps. While both can be called "liberal," *The Nation* is sometimes radical, *The New Republic* never. (Note the *New Republic*'s timorous handling, this past year, of Rockefeller, of Kissinger, of the Mayaguez affair.)

Shortly after Carey McWilliams became editor, the Sept. 3, 1955 issue of *The Nation* carried an article by Waldo Frank, "Toward A New Radicalism." Its reflective prescience is the kind one has come to expect from *The Nation*. "The world in which we were all born is dying," Frank wrote. His hope for change did not lie with more liberal Presidents or Congressmen: "... political action in our day must be the people's." Yes, politics was complex (hence the liberal susceptibility to "experts") but Frank had faith that "a certain intuitive, emotional knowledge" of complicated situations "can be awakened" within extraordinary, ordinary people.

*The Nation*, always in financial trouble, never with a circulation much above 25,000, has had what Carey McWilliams calls an "uncanny tenacity." Its influence has been greater than publications with 10 times its circulation, because it is read by politicians, teachers, and newspaper people all over the country, to get the nuggets of non-official information that liberal writers can put into conservative newspapers, that socially-conscious teachers can bring out in flag-bedecked classrooms, that maverick Congressmen can use in legislative argument, that radical organizers need to buttress political positions beyond those of *The Nation* itself.

In 1965, commenting on the Hundredth Anniversary of *The Nation*, McWilliams summed up—accurately, I believe—its history. "It has been consistently against racism, against war,

against imperialism, against the abuse of power, against the swinishness of political machines, against charlatanism, demagoguery, and super-patriotism of the flag-waving variety." Its essence, he said, was that it "refused to buy the official line."

He and *The Nation* were right about that, and many other things. In 1956, amidst self-congratulation about American prosperity, they ran a piece by William Appleman Williams, "Babbitt's New Fables," in which Williams found no basic change in the distribution of income, and foreboding for the economic future. In a premonition of the sixties' discovery of the "military-industrial complex" there was, that same year, by Matthew Josephson, a series of articles: "The Pentagon's Rising Power." Also, a piece on wiretapping, a criticism of Adlai Stevenson for asking a "gradual" approach to racial equality, and a McWilliams editorial on the "Miracle in Alabama," pointing to the Montgomery bus boycott and the transformation of presumably apathetic blacks into a "disciplined, articulate, superbly confident community."

And so *The Nation* went, through the years, several political steps ahead of almost everyone. Special muckraking issues by Fred Cook on "The FBI," "The CIA," and "Juggernaut: The Warfare State." A 1958 piece by Eve Merriam, a decade before the flowering of the women's liberation movement, saying "sex prejudice is still one of the cornerstones of our social structure (you have only to compare the status of any extra woman at a party with that of any extra man)."

And then, of course, its early, unwavering criticism of the war in Vietnam. As the bombing became thunderous in the fall of 1965 and the troops poured in, a *Nation* editorial said, with the kind of anger one does not find often enough in American journalism: "If we are different from, say, the Germans of World War II, now is the time to make the difference manifest. If we fail to do so, we will be judged by history as they have been judged." Eric Hobsbawm, the British historian, had already predicted the defeat of the United States in the pages of *The Nation* (July 19, 1965): "When, for one reason or another, a guerrilla war has become genuinely national and nationwide, and has expelled the official administration from wide stretches of the countryside, the chances of defeating it are zero. . . . The situation in Vietnam is lost."

Those who have written for Carey McWilliams these past 20 years (I include myself) testify to his kindness, his enormous energy, his amazing skill at picking the right writer on the right topic, his incessant quest for meticulous reporting as well as for thoughtful analyses, and, most of all, his adamant moral integrity. In the tough, dangerous years that remain in this century, we will have need of more like him.

—HOWARD ZINN



# HELLBOX

## Mouse Caught In Vice Raid

Walt Disney Productions, Inc., is asking for some \$700,000 in damages from a group of Bay area cartoonists adjudged to have defamed Mickey Mouse and violated Disney copyrights. The group, known as the Air Pirates, lived and worked during 1969 and 1970 in a San Francisco warehouse owned by film director Francis Ford Coppola. They produced two issues of *Air Pirates Funnies*—which featured a dozen or so creatures from the Disney menage engaged in compromising and sexually explicit situations. *Air Pirates* No. 1, typical of the Air Pirates' products, opens with a lecherous, cigar-smoking "Dirty Duck" attempting to seduce a young hippie matron, and closes with an episode in which Mickey worries plaintively, "The whole world thinks I'm cute. So why won't Minnie fuck me?"

*Air Pirates* No. 3—which was to feature a shotgun marriage between Minnie and Mickey, after the two had been forced to take hallucinogenic drugs by their illegitimate offspring—never had a chance to appear. Disney Productions hired Pinkerton agents to serve papers on Air Pirates Dan O'Neill, Bobby London, Gary Hallgren and Ted Richards; later served was the publisher of *Last Gasp Eco-Funnies*, Ron Turner.

In its legal briefs, Disney has argued that the Air Pirates have not

Sandy Huffaker



only violated its copyrights, but that the comics were "likely to tarnish the affirmative association of wholesomeness which the public has with regard to Disney's characters." Disney lawyers called the comics "obscene" and "perverted" and argued that free speech guarantees did not allow the Air Pirates "to use Mickey Mouse as the vehicle for promoting their views on sexual morality."

The Air Pirates and their lawyers, meanwhile, have argued that the cartoonists were engaged in a defensible form of parody, which by definition involves some borrowing from the original, and should therefore be protected by the First Amendment. "Piracy is taking someone's work,

copying it photographically, and selling it as your own," says O'Neill, who created the comic strip *Odd Bodkins*. "It would be reproducing their work so that no one could tell the difference between the original and the counterfeit. Parody is our way of fighting Disney's ideas." Hallgren points out that the villains in the Disney strips are based on ethnic stereotypes and adds that "as a bread-and-butter American youth, I believed in the myth of Mickey Mouse. I became an adult when I discovered the Mouse was oleomargarine."

Disney has already won a lower court judgment against three of the Air Pirates and settled out of court with Hallgren and Turner for \$85,000—which Disney has agreed not to collect as long as Hallgren and Turner tell no one that Disney hasn't collected it. From the other three defendants Disney is asking for lawyers' fees, plus the statutory minimum of \$5,000 per copyright violation—and claims that there are 85 violations.

O'Neill, London and Richards plan to appeal on the grounds that a jury and not the trial judge should have decided whether what they were doing was acceptable as parody.

—WILLIAM BATES

## Back To Business

Pittsburgh's WWSW-AM caused an uproar recently when it omitted the stock market report from its 5 p.m. news. Why such concern with financial exotica? The reason may be that WWSW's market figures report the day's "numbers" for followers of the illegal numbers racket. Numbers players bet on three-digit numbers in each of two systems, the "old" and "new," with winning numbers determined by the day's market activity. The old number consists of the final digits in the number of advances, declines and unchanged shares; the new number consists of digits in the total volume, stock and bond sales.

The racket flourishes because at 600-1 odds, players may bet pennies and still dream of instant wealth. Although other stations in the Pittsburgh area report the numbers before the evening paper comes out, WWSW is the traditional source. One devotee says he has been getting the numbers from WWSW for 40 years.

There were conflicting versions of why the market report was dropped. One station employee said a sponsor initiated the move.irate callers were told there had been a change in policy. A secretary explained that she had received "many" complaints and that "numbers" had been mentioned. Station president John Gibbs, however, insisted that the report's dropping was "inadvertent"—the mistake of a new staffer. Were there calls of protest? "There might have been three or four," Gibbs said. "I don't think you have a story."

Nevertheless, the market report reappeared in its regular slot after an absence of two days.

—EVAN PATTAK



"Didja hear the one about Sadat and Gola?"

UPI

## Table Talk

It was your standard, set-piece diplomatic dinner. Henry Kissinger was in Ottawa for two days, and on the first evening Canadian External Affairs Minister Allan MacEachen was hosting a banquet in Kissinger's honor at the Ministry. The dinner toasts would be fed to the journalists gathered at the National Press Building, about a mile and a half away. The more experienced reporters knew that the formal toasts were not scheduled until 9:30 p.m. or so, and until then there was nothing to do. While waiting, the reporters were invited by the External Affairs Press Office to have some beer and pretzels and watch the World Series on television. That is what most of them did.

However, several young reporters, too inexperienced to know that there was no news while the dining was still going on, arrived early. Judy Morrison, a parliamentary reporter for Radionews, Ltd. of Canada, was told that she could plug in her tape recorder as early as 8 p.m. Her competitor, Brian Nelson, of Standard Broadcast News, also arrived early, as did Michael Benedict, a young reporter for the *Toronto Star*. Out of the clatter and chatter of the banquet room, Judy Morrison, checking the line with her earphones, began to recognize some voices. There was the familiar, deep baritone with the German accent, apparently in lively conversation with Liberal backbencher Albanie Marin. Morrison was suddenly transfixed. "My God, he's talking about Chou En-lai!" She, Nelson and Benedict had the same reflexes; they started recording the dinner table conversation that was coming over the line. Among the tidbits:

- Richard Nixon, said Deep Voice, was an "odd, artificial and unpleasant man" who had "barely governed" during the last 18 months of his stay in the White House.

- Chou En-lai was apparently dying and

- Pat Nixon was "sexy." (There is some dispute about this part of Kissinger's remarks and there is no one tape that has a full, clear version. Morrison thinks Kissinger is talking

about Pat Nixon. Benedict says it is clear that Kissinger is referring to Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.)

The three reporters listening to all this reacted differently. Nelson decided that the broadcast line was installed for the purpose of the formal toasts, that the American Secretary of State didn't know he was being listened to, and that the sort of gossip coming over the line was not the kind of news he was assigned to cover. So he deliberately erased his tape. "If Kissinger had said, 'O.K., we're going to put the screws to Canada on the automobile pact,' or something like that, the national interest would have outweighed the fact that I was overhearing table talk, and I would have used it. But it wasn't," says Nelson. Morrison and Benedict also wondered about the ethics of the situation and decided to take up the matter with their bureau chiefs in the morning. In both cases, it was decided that the material should be used, but by an incredible series of foul-ups and misunderstandings, *The Washington Post*, which wasn't even there, scooped everybody.

Radionews, which is partly owned by CBS and acts as CBS's agent in Canada, fed a story about the conversation (the tape itself was not of broadcast quality) to CBS Radio News in New York and to Radionews headquarters in Toronto. Both lost the story—misplaced it, Morrison says. Because of a misunderstanding, Bruce Garvey, the Ottawa bureau chief for *The Toronto Star*, and a stringer for *The Washington Post*, gave the story based on Benedict's tape to the *Post* before the *Star*, an afternoon paper, had a chance to print the story. Garvey has gotten into terrible hot water as a result and now refuses to discuss the story.

Ronald Koven, foreign editor of the *Post*, who handled the tape story, says, "I didn't give the ethics a second thought and neither did [executive editor Ben] Bradlee. We didn't set out to invade his privacy, so it's not like going through his trash, nor did we bug his telephone. It's not the press's business to go around protecting Henry Kissinger."

James Bellow, editor of *The Washington Star*, agrees. "When Kissinger



# HELLBOX

is speaking with a group of people, he's making his views public. It's not like writing a letter to his mother and then having somebody find the carbon copy in his trash and reading it later." Kissinger's special assistant for press relations, Robert Anderson, says, "There is no question that public officials must be responsible for their public utterances. It is only fair, however, that these officials also should have the privilege of holding private conversations. I can understand that because of the intense competition among news organizations, some may be tempted to file a story such as this. But in my own case, I would have told my home office, 'Sorry, I'm just not made this way.'"

Barrie Dunsmore, of ABC News, who had travelled to Ottawa from Washington for the Kissinger visit, says he knew that some interesting table talk was being recorded. But he refused to do the story then and later because, he said, "It smacked of electronic surveillance."

The question seems to be: is Ronald Koven right and are ethics (to paraphrase Ron Ziegler) bullshit when it comes to an exclusive, interesting story about a public figure? If the answer is yes, journalists should not be surprised when some members of the public, who may not have the same values, conclude that the *National Enquirer*, which paws through one kind of scraps from Henry Kissinger's table, and the *Washington Post*, which gladly prints another kind of scrap, are indistinguishable.

—JIM ANDERSON

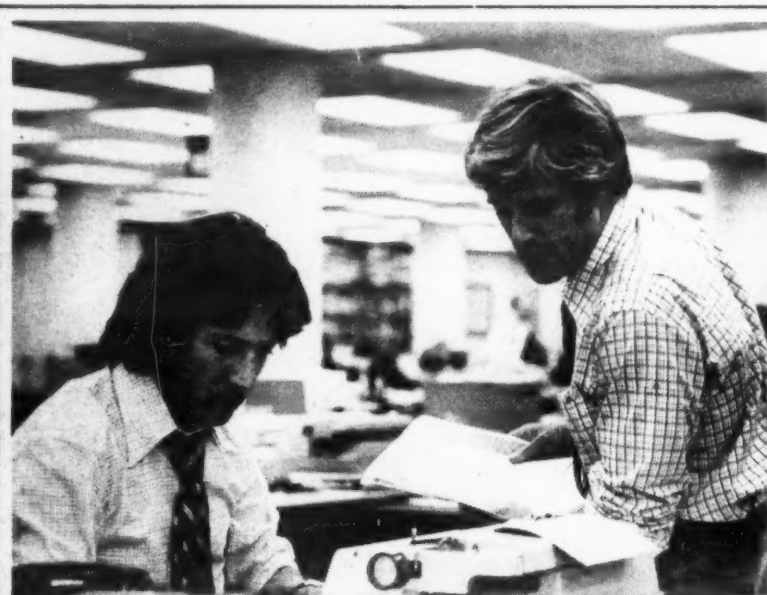
## Death Watch

"Should Karen be kept alive?"

As 21-year old Karen Quinlan clung to life on a mechanical respirator in a New Jersey hospital, the Philadelphia *Daily News* asked its 240,000 readers to answer that simple question in a mail-in poll. The ballot, which appeared on three successive days, provided "Yes" and "No" boxes for the reader to check off, along with two lines for additional comment. It first ran on Oct. 1 as part of a full-page tabloid spread on the controversial case,



Karen Quinlan



Dustin Hoffman (Carl Bernstein), left, and Robert Redford (Bob Woodward) during shooting of *All The President's Men* in The Washington Post newsroom painstakingly duplicated in Burbank. "We're not making a movie exclusively for the newspaper profession," says Redford. "We're trying to show it like it is, warts and all." The film is scheduled for release around Easter.

without any explanation of the poll or its purpose.

The following day, the *News* reported it had received 25 phone calls questioning the propriety of the poll. It reprinted the ballot "for those who care to participate in an open forum," noting that "open discussion of issues is a necessary part of a free society."

Responding to the complaining callers, the *News* wrote:

"To them and all readers, it should be clear; whether Karen is allowed to live or die will be decided in the courts."

The *News* printed the results the following week, along with an article signed by Paul Janensch, the managing editor, expressing regret over the way the poll was handled.

Janensch wrote that he didn't regret running the poll because "we want to know what our readers think," but added, "I do regret that we didn't explain at the start what we were doing and why." The managing editor told [MORE] he now thinks the ballot "was worded too bluntly and insensitively." He said it should have focused more on the broader issue of artificial life support, rather than merely asking "Should Karen be kept alive?"

The poll drew slightly more than 1,000 responses, considerably less than similar *News* surveys on the J.F.K. assassination investigation and the fall television schedule. The paper reported that 555 respondents said Karen should be permitted to die, 547 said she should be kept alive by machine and 35 were listed as undecided.

Two weeks later, the New York *Daily News* conducted a telephone poll on the same issue and found less sentiment against allowing Karen to die. Asked "Do you agree with Karen Quinlan's parents that she be taken off the respirator and allowed to die in dignity?" 59 per cent of the 532 adults

surveyed answered "yes," 24 per cent responded "no," and 17 per cent were recorded as answering "don't know." The New York poll found greatest opposition to letting Karen die among New Jersey residents, Protestants, men and members of minority groups. Greatest support for Karen's parents came from Jews, unmarried persons, college graduates and more affluent people.

—MICHAEL SILVER

## Hidden Observer

When Henry Gemmill, editor of the *National Observer*, discovered that a confidential subscriber poll his newspaper commissioned was numbering questionnaires with invisible ink to identify respondents, he was stunned and angry. With the assistance of reporter Mike Malloy, Gemmill went public with a full-page explanatory story on Nov. 1, labeling the episode "slick trickery." According to the *Observer* article, such publications as *Time*, *Reader's Digest*, *Saturday Review*, *Fortune*, *New York* and *Forbes* have all used some form of invisible coding and, in some cases, the same independent research firm, Erdos and Morgan of New York.

"It's not the method that's new, it's the political climate that has changed... Watergate has changed things," claimed Paul Erdos, president of Erdos and Morgan. Erdos staunchly defended the use of invisible code numbers on questionnaires, insisting they have been employed for the sole purpose of expediting follow-up letters to persons not responding to the questionnaires. Erdos said all possible precautions are taken to protect the guaranteed confidentiality of responses.

"Erdos and Morgan is dripping with integrity," Gemmill told [MORE]. "but that's not the issue. We feel our readers were deceived." Gemmill expressed concern not only for the breach of the anonymity of readers'

replies (the eight-page questionnaire asked subscribers to share private financial and personal information), but for what he considered the great potential for misuse.

[MORE] recently learned that the *Columbia Journalism Review* commissioned Erdos and Morgan to conduct a subscriber poll in September 1974. The E. & M. contract, signed by a business officer of the *Review*, stated, "We will send... a one-page, two-sided questionnaire individually, invisibly keyed for possible statistical use only...."

"I'm really embarrassed," *Review* publisher and former Columbia journalism school Dean Edward W. Barrett said. "You know, this is like what's happening in Washington." Barrett was not the publisher at the time of the study. In a statement prepared for [MORE], Barrett added, "... this particular technique contains potential for abuse and will not be approved by the *Review* for use in any future study." *CJR* is planning to cover the entire story in its next issue.

—RICHARD MERRILL COHEN

## Lions Beat Christians

Meredith Corporation, the printer of such chaste magazines as *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Successful Farming*, began printing *Penthouse* and *Viva* as of the November issues. This event was greeted by the refusal of seven Meredith printing and production workers to get involved in such an enterprise on moral grounds. Their subsequent dismissals were reported in the press and read about by Bob Jones 3rd, president and grandson of the founder of Bob Jones University, a small Christian liberal arts school in South Carolina that is self-described as "standing for the 'ole time religion.'"

At a daily chapel meeting Oct. 2, Jones called on his students and faculty to cancel their subscriptions to *Better Homes & Gardens*, *Successful Farming* and *Brides*, another magazine printed by the company. "You will either have a voice in moral issues or you'll be destroyed by immorality," he said, and ordered the school library to stop stocking those publications. Meredith also prints *Ms.*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Town & Country*, and *Psychology Today*, but these magazines escaped the boycott—and remain on the library shelf of Bob Jones U.—because the article Jones read did not mention that they were Meredith clients.

A spokesman for the university deplored the firings by Meredith of "these Christians" whose consciences forbade them to work on "pornography." A Meredith spokesman says they have received less than 25 letters from Bob Jones University complaining about their new printing clients, but have replied to all unfavorable mail by saying the new contract saved up to 225 jobs.

—KEN KALFUS



# The Great Toilet Paper War

BY RON ROSENBAUM

One of the more curious of the recent Charmin toilet tissue TV spots gives us a rare glimpse of supermarket manager George Whipple in a reflective, even tender, mood. Quite uncharacteristically, this particular Charmin commercial takes us far from the familiar setting of the series—the paper products aisle of Jerry's supermarket—where we are accustomed to see Whipple engaged in one after another frustrating struggle against Charmin-squeezing housewives. No, in this spot we find ourselves in the untroubled interior of Whipple's own home as George, surrounded by wife and children, reflects on how it all began.

"There I was, a young man just starting out," Whipple says, "Had my own store."

"Did you stop the ladies from squeezing the Charmin Dad?" young Whipple Junior asks.

"You betcha!" Whipple recalls proudly.

Then one day, Whipple continues, a bit dreamily now, he saw a special woman in the toilet paper aisle. She was squeezing, like the others, but somehow she was different from all the others.

"I was about to tell her, please don't squeeze the Charmin, when I took one look at her and fell in love."

Romantic music swells in the background. The family Whipple grows misty-eyed. "And you let me squeeze the Charmin, didn't you George?" says Mrs. W.

"Yep," Whipple tells the kids. "And until this day your mother's the only one I've let squeeze the Charmin."

More is going on here than the obvious allegory linking Charmin and sexual fidelity. There's turmoil in toilet paper marketing these days, turnover in toilet tissue ad campaigns. There are signs—the unusual Whipple-family-at-home spot, just one of many—that the uncertainties of the marketplace are beginning to affect one of the single most successful, most notorious, longest-running ad campaigns ever to appear in any medium. There are even intimations that, after a full decade on the air, George Whipple's days in the toilet paper aisle are numbered. Perhaps there's a foreshadowing of this in Whipple's sentimental journey into the past. Maybe it's time to take a look at the media phenomenon the Charmin campaign has become, focusing first, like Whipple, on how it all began.

**T**he time had come to kill off Gentle the Dog. The year was 1964. For two years, Gentle the Dog had been the number one spokescreature for Charmin toilet paper. Commercials for Charmin featured the fluffy animated animal romping around with other gentle animated souls—a gentle juggler who juggled only soft things, a gentle movie star named Belinda Beautiful who played only gentle roles, even a gentle dog-catcher. But the Procter & Gamble people who produced Charmin and the Benton & Bowles people who produced the commercials decided that Gentle the Dog just didn't fit in with the big marketing plans P&G had for Charmin. P&G production people had devised a new toilet paper making process, one they felt P&G could use to push its then-tiny Charmin brand into full-scale competition with the giant of the toilet paper industry, Scott. A February 1973 P&G report explains the secret of this history-making toilet paper breakthrough:

The fibers from which tissue is made enter the paper machines in a very dilute water solution. Nearly all of this water has to be removed. Previously, the only way to remove the excess water from the tissue was to "squeeze" it out [which] compressed the tissue fibers, taking away from their fluffiness and softness . . . [T]he solu-

Ron Rosenbaum, a contributing editor of Esquire, occasionally writes about the advertising business.



**Mr. Whipple and his Charmin-squeezing housewives star in perhaps the longest-running, most notorious and successful ad campaign in TV history—but signs are that Whipple's days may be numbered.**

tion was relatively simple—eliminate as much of the physical pressing as possible and substitute a flow of hot air [which] would actually "fluff it up" . . . This allows for a deeper, more cushiony texture. An added benefit . . . is that less wood fiber per roll is required to make the same amount of this improved tissue.

In other words, in this new process, each square of one-ply Charmin toilet paper had less paper in it, but *looked* softer. (Whether it *felt* more "cushiony" is a hot dispute we will get into later.) The master marketing strategists at P&G thought this process could give them the opening they wanted in their plot against Scott: they could "position" this fluffed-up, cheaper tissue between the rougher low-cost one-ply papers (dominated by Scott tissue) and the softer, more expensive "facial quality" two-ply tissues (dominated by Scott's "Softweve"). Thus they would be offering greater fluffiness to the one-ply buyers and lower price to the two-ply people, thereby taking the trade of both away from Scott and making big money because they use less pulp per sheet. It would take just the right ad campaign to introduce this fluffed up Charmin into big-league competition and it looked as if Gentle the Dog couldn't hack the new responsibility. P&G needed a barker of a different sort. Oh, they gave the fluffy mutt a chance. They experimented with an ad in which Gentle trots into a courtroom, asks a judge to have his name

changed from "Gentle" to "Gentler" and explains to the puzzled magistrate that new Charmin toilet tissue is "Gentler than ever." This commercial had the effect of putting many people to sleep. Also one dog.

So, in the summer of 1964, Benton & Bowles assigned a three-person creative team to come up with a brand new concept for selling Charmin. The job that faced creative director Jim Haines, group supervisor Flora Fifield and junior copy writer John Chervokas is generally considered one of the toughest in the ad business because of certain built-in limitations on toilet paper advertising. Obviously you can't do on-camera comparisons. No before-and-after demonstrations. In fact, at one time toilet paper people had a rough time convincing broadcasters toilet paper commercials should even be permitted on home screens because of their inherent indelicacy. So from the beginning toilet paper was soft-peddled on TV, and most toilet papers found 1,001 indistinguishable ways to peddle themselves as soft.

Charmin started at a bit of a disadvantage in the soft parade, because for a long time it was one of the few tissues that hadn't cultivated a soft image. And with good reason: it wasn't that soft. When P&G acquired the Charmin tissue-making factory in Green Bay, Wisconsin, back in 1957, Charmin tissue was sort of a rough-hewn, backwoods toilet tissue, sold mainly in rural North Country counties. (Skeptics at the time of the purchase, unaware of Charmin's place in P&G's grand design, wisecracked that the main reason for the acquisition must have been to get season tickets to Packers games for executives from P&G's Cincinnati headquarters).

In keeping with the rough-and-ready quality of early Charmin, the pre-P&G ads for the brand featured a crude, euphemistic absorption test. "They dropped two tissues into a pot of water to see which one sunk first," is the way Jim Haines recalls an early Charmin turkey. (Since similar tests usually advertise the toughness of heavy duty paper towels these days, one can speculate on what Charmin felt like back then.) The first series of P&G-produced commercials de-emphasized the stiffness but still gave the impression that it was a heavy-duty, institutional, even *outdoorsy* type toilet tissue: there were endorsements from the housekeeper of an Alpine Chalet-Inn and the housekeeper of a riverboat.





It didn't take P&G's market research people long to establish that there was a great hunger in the growing American middle class for more softness in their toilet tissue, that there was a correlation between moving up in economic class and moving "up" from one-ply to two-ply tissue because two-ply was soft, and for one reason or another—advertising being one big reason—soft white tissue was an emblem of the soft white-collar life. But it wasn't until 1960 that P&G production people had softened up Charmin enough to bring Gentle the Dog and his gentle friends to announce that Charmin was "fluffed, buffed and brushed," presumably like Gentle the Dog's fluffy coat. But comparing a toilet tissue to dogs hair is risky business considering the popularity of wire hair terriers.

And in any case *gentle* is still not *soft*. *Gentle* still has a residue of averted pain in it (as in "Don't hurt, please be gentle"). *Gentle* is not soft, either. Even *soft* itself wasn't enough for the brand new ad P&G and B&B wanted from the creative team they assigned to the Charmin account. Everyone was soft already. And Scott's "Softweve" had already beaten everybody to "Softer than soft." Had the whole soft thing reached a dead end, or was there some way to say *softer than softer-than-soft*, and to say it in a way that made a shopper, sated by so many similar softs, select it from the shelf?

There are two versions of the moment of discovery. There may be a third. Flora Fifield, the only one of the Benton & Bowles creative trio no longer in advertising, is reportedly living somewhere in Vermont teaching school, and I was unable to locate her. (Both Proctor & Gamble and Benton & Bowles, interestingly, claimed no memory and no records of the three people who created the momentous Mr. Whipple campaign and offered no help in finding them, or in supplying storyboards.)

Jim Haines, the creative head of the trio at the time, is now a partner in an ad agency in Johannesburg.\* I spoke to him during one of his visits to

New York. The way he remembers the big moment, it began with the three of them crammed into copywriter Chervokas' cubicle at Benton & Bowles' Fifth Avenue office, tossing a roll of toilet paper to and fro. They were at their wit's end, none of the ideas they'd tried had worked. They had run out of new ideas and they were running out of time. "It was one of those grade-B movie situations," Haines recalls. "We were having a think session, you know, a frustration session and we were not only kicking ideas around we were tossing the roll around, and we started to get the giggles." The Muse must have kissed the airborne Charmin in midflight because suddenly, "John [Chervokas] caught the roll and started to squeeze it and somebody said, 'Don't squeeze it' and John said, 'Please don't squeeze it' or 'Please don't squeeze the Charmin' and it just happened. The thing just rolled off his tongue. . . ."

The way John Chervokas tells it there was no roll of toilet paper in the air. "I don't remember tossing any roll around, no," Chervokas told me when I spoke to him in his big new office at the Warwick, Welsh & Miller agency. Chervokas has just received another of the many promotions that have marked his career since the Charmin creation, the latest being a move from creative director at William Esty to senior vice president-creative director at Warwick. Back in 1972, Chervokas wrote for *Advertising Age* a tongue-in-cheek "confession" about his key role in writing Mr. Whipple into advertising history, but he concedes the Charmin conception has "definitely been a plus" in his career.

Like Haines, Chervokas sets the scene of the historic discovery in his junior writers' cubicle at Benton & Bowles, but Chervokas recalls a more elaborate operation of the creative process. Chervokas says the discovery grew out of their feeling that instead of just *saying* soft, or *showing* soft people and things, they should figure out a way to *demonstrate* soft. What follows is Chervokas's reconstruction in *Ad Age* of the free association process that lead to the birth of Whipple:

How to demonstrate softness? A feather is soft, but suggests tickling. A baby's behind suggests softness, but that's "too restrictive." Silk is soft, but comparing Charmin to silk risks "over promising." What about a fall? A soft fall. A fall

on a pillow? Hugging a pillow? Squeezing a pillow? Squeeze a banana!?

Wait a minute. Here was something. What does a woman do in a supermarket? She squeezes melons, tomatoes, bread . . . Squeeze *Charmin*!

There it was. Just one hitch remained, according to Chervokas, and in the ingenuity of its solution was the birth of George Whipple. Someone pointed out that if the ad told women to squeeze Charmin in the store, "supermarket managers will go crazy. The answer was to tell them *not* to squeeze it." But how to tell them not to squeeze it? You have a crazy supermarket manager tell them not to squeeze it, that's how. "In an hour and a half," Chervokas wrote, "America's most universally despised advertising campaign became a reality."

Unlike the physicists working on the Manhattan Project who knew the magnitude of the terror they were about to unleash upon the world, the three people in that cubicle were unaware of the advertising explosion they had on their hands. According to Haines, "We were having a lot of laughs and we thought this was just another laugh until the substance of it was allowed to sink in." They liked the don't-squeeze idea, but the idea of the supermarket manager obsessed with protecting his Charmin from squeezers seemed a bit madcap at the time, particularly for a relatively cautious and conservative client like Proctor & Gamble. The higher ups at Benton & Bowles were a little nervous about it, too. "We encountered some abrasion," Haines recalls, "It may have been inside the agency. They considered it terribly harebrained; it took a lot of convincing inside to get them to convince Cincinnati to test the thing. Somebody had to go out there to fight tooth-and-nail for the campaign."

Even when P&G executives in Cincinnati grudgingly agreed to shell out for production of three 60-second sample scripts of the "Don't squeeze" concept there was no guarantee any one of them would ever make it on the air. Everything depended on the execution, as they say in the ad business, and the success of the execution, most everyone agreed, depended on how successfully the

\*Among other things, he's in charge of advertising a South African toilet tissue brand called "Cushy." The campaign for "Cushy" features, as I recall Haines description, an Afrikaaner grandmother who is so obsessed with squeezing soft "Cushy" that she takes it to her bedroom with her; her family is constantly finding itself without tissue in time of need and pleading the brand's slogan, "Please keep the Cushy in the Loo."



slightly mad character of the supermarket character could be brought off. According to Haines, Chervokas "had a very definite brief in mind. He wanted a milquetoast character, a bit, I suppose effeminate in his way, nervous, intimidated, but a champion of Charmin." Chervokas remembers, "I was originally thinking of an Edmund Gwennish kind of character—you know, *Miracle on 34th Street*—you know, a lovable little fraud, maybe a little dumpy..." Whoever it turned out to be, they needed just the right actor to do it just the right way. The agency put out a casting call to both coasts and started compiling a reel of filmed auditions for the part.

**M**ost comedy drunk acts these days are gassy drunk acts—the loudmouth, the weeper, the burper. But the classic drunk acts of the golden age of vaudeville were the dancer acrobatic drunk acts. That's what Dick Wilson, the man who plays Mr. Whipple, told me. He was a dancer acrobatic drunk act. This meant he'd go up on a tight rope and make all sorts of funny heart-stopping drunken near-falls. "I worked with tails. I was classy, a lot of class, but a drunk," he said. He toured the best Canadian and English vaudeville circuits, played drunks for Olsen and Johnson and ended up in America after the war. TV was good to him. "I must have done over 350 TV shows as a drunk. I'm the drunk in *Bewitched*, I was the drunk on *The Paul Lynde Show*, I did a lot of Disney's drunks." He almost got his first big break in a non-drunk part when some TV people were all set to cast him as the sidekick of *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*. At the last minute, however, the part got written out and Sergeant Preston was given a dog named "King" as a substitute sidekick. "I was supposed to be the dog," Wilson said.

Despite these and other disappointments in non-drunk parts, Wilson knew he was capable of more in show business. Maybe he wouldn't play Hamlet, but he wouldn't be satisfied with just playing drunks. He'd begun doing some freelance stage show producing in 1964. That summer he was in Las Vegas producing a Shirley MacLaine Revue at a place called "The Kings Road Tally Ho" when he got a call from his agent. "He asked me: 'What do you think of toilet paper?'" Wilson recalls. "And I told him I think everybody should use it." "No, no, no," the agent said, according to Wilson, whom I suspect has polished this Big Break scene into a little routine over the years. "I'm asking you how would you like to do a commercial for toilet paper, there's an audition tomorrow." "How do you audition toilet paper?" Wilson asked. And his agent said, "Please go and take a screen test," and I said a screen test would be a permanent record. But I went and they liked me because five days later we were making the first Charmin commercial in a supermarket in Flushing."

"Dick Wilson was kidding me when he says you made the first ones in Flushing wasn't he?" I asked Howard Magwood, the man who directed them.

"No, no, no. It was Flushing," Magwood insisted.

It wasn't Flushing," says John Chervokas who was there to watch the filming of his scripts. "I think it was Astoria."

By the time director Magwood and his 10-person production crew set up for shooting in the Flushing/Astoria market, the original scripts drawn up at Benton & Bowles had undergone two interesting modifications. The name George Whipple, for instance, was a late change. I had always harbored a suspicion that it was no accident that "Whipple" sounded like a sinister fusion of "Whip" and "nipple," and that perhaps some devious motivational research person had created the name as an emblem of a submerged sado-masochistic element in the relations between Whipple and the housewives who risk his punishment for the pleasure of a squeeze.

Alas, the true story seems more innocent. I was able to acquire a copy of a handsketched storyboard draft of one of those original Charmin

scripts, this one dated Sept. 24, 1964 and titled "Digby to the Rescue." In this draft, the store manager is named, not Whipple, but "Edgar Bartholomew," a far less provocative choice. The switch to Whipple was made, according to Chervokas, not to make the name more kinky, but because a real Edgar Bartholomew could not be found to sell the rights to his name. (When an ad agency gives commercial characters names, it makes a point of finding real persons with that name and persuades them to sell the use of their name for a token fee, so that other real persons with that name won't have legal standing to argue that their name is the one being used.) Back in 1964, the public relations director of Benton & Bowles was a well-liked man named George Whipple. Whether or not the hints of whip and nipple had anything to do with it, the creative people liked his name as a replacement for Bartholomew and the real George Whipple sold his agency the use of his name for one dollar.

There is one kinky aspect of the first draft sketch of "Digby to the Rescue" that never made it into the final shooting script. It's the bit in which Digby the cop sticks his nose into the core of the toilet paper roll. The way it happens in the draft I have, store manager "Edgar Bartholomew" finds himself so overwhelmed with Charmin-squeezing women that he summons the local cop, Officer Digby, to restore order. The women insist that Digby give the Charmin a squeeze himself to see why they find it so irresistible. Over Bartholomew's protest ("You're on duty!") Digby takes a squeeze. He's visibly impressed, but the women insist that he sniff it, too. (P&G had been perfuming the cardboard core of Charmin rolls for some time.) The sketch calls for the fully uniformed cop to unwrap the paper and plunge his nose into the scented core, take a deep sniff, say "Ummmm . . ." and come up for air totally won over to the Charmin ladies' cause. The big sniff was eliminated from the final shooting—at least on camera. In the storyboard made from the final filmed version of "Digby to the Rescue" the camera tactfully shifts away from Digby as he checks out the fragrance.

Despite this evidence of concern for taste, the original Flushing/Astoria Charmin commercials are not without some less than chaste moments. One script, entitled "Mrs. Logan," has a hidden Whipple staring at a certain Mrs. Logan squeezing tomatoes, melons and, finally, Charmin, at which point Whipple exposes himself to view and bursts out with the familiar admonition, "Please don't squeeze the Charmin." Then Whipple sneaks off by himself and chortles, "If you only knew, Mrs. Logan. I can't resist it myself. I like to sneak a squeeze on the sly."

"Wasn't that a bit of an innuendo," I asked John Chervokas.

"No, those were pre-innuendo days," Chervokas maintains, innocently. However, it seems clear that one advantage of pre-innuendo innocence was that ad men could get away with saying some very blatant things without the advertising acceptability departments imagining anyone would be dirty-minded enough to think of it's innuendo implications (viz. the cigarette ad "It's not how long you make it, it's how you make it long.")

**M**aybe you don't immediately think of Shakespeare when you watch a Charmin commercial, but according to director Howard Magwood it was the Bard himself who suggested the solution to the single most perplexing problem in producing the original Charmin dramas. "It was a theatrical problem," says Magwood, who left a theatrical career to become a successful commercial director. "The problem was how to play the Charmin-squeezing women. These three broads had to be believable. We'd turn people off if they looked too stupid. The audience has to believe it's fun, crazy, but you can't have actors gagging it up, you have to believe it's real when you do it."

Out in Flushing/Astoria that day, the actresses Magwood had cast for the Charmin-

squeezers were having trouble believing in their part. There were repeated run-throughs where Wilson/Whipple was fine, but the ladies just weren't right. Suddenly the Shakespearian solution suggested itself to Magwood. "I told them, 'Try to think of this as the three witches in *Macbeth*, because they're kind of wild and crazy, and they said 'Oooh that's it.''" They fell to their frenzy with immediately successful and believable results—all too believable, perhaps, in the long run, because the demented witchlike quality of their behavior has earned the Charmin campaign considerable hostility from the women's movement.

**E**ven when the three original Charmin spots were finally "in the can," as they say in the film business, not many people believed they'd get out for long until the astonishing statistics from the first recall test came back. Proctor & Gamble believes in careful testing before committing itself to a campaign. The company gave the Charmin spots a tryout then known as the Burke Recall Test. Benton & Bowles quietly slipped a sample 60-second Charmin spot, reportedly "Digby to the Rescue," into the regular TV programming in a selected midwestern market. The following day, a consumer research firm called a sample of home viewers and asked them what they watched the day before and if they remembered any particular commercials.

Previous tests of other concepts for a new Charmin campaign had produced recall scores ranging from a mediocre 27 to a humiliating two, according to Chervokas. Then, one day that winter, in another Grade B movie development, junior writer Chervokas (the Charmin campaign was his first assignment at Benton & Bowles) got a call from a B&B biggie. "Sit down, John," he said, Chervokas recalls. "Your Charmin commercial scored 55." That was a record smasher, the highest recall score of any commercial tested up until then.

*The Wall Street Journal* (Oct. 20, 1971) described the marketing mayhem that followed the fullscale debut of the new Charmin campaign as "the great toilet paper war" of the sixties. The *Journal* recognized the importance of Mr. Whipple, calling him "no mere foot soldier" in the war, but gave chief credit for P&G's stunning victories over Scott to P&G's big battalions—the billion dollar company's "awesome marketing muscle" and its "sales force like an invading army." The P&G battle plan was to conquer the country with Charmin one region at a time. First the midwest, then south to Texas, finally around 1970 attacking the East Coast and the Southwest, and not until just this year moving its troops across the Rockies into California. The strategy in each region was to soften the territory up with massive airstrikes—in 1970 P&G spent \$2 million on air time for Whipple spots—then bring the "invading army" into the supermarkets with marketing muscle to command big displays and premium shelf space placement.†

It worked. By 1970, Charmin had gone from nowhere to equality with the market share of Scott Tissue, the largest selling one-ply in the country. Not only that, Charmin began to steal customers away from Scott's "Soft Weave" and other two-ply tissues. In the five years between 1969 and 1974, production of two-ply tissue increased by only seven per cent, or 36,000 tons, while one-ply production went up 160,000 tons, nearly 20 per cent. The growth of Charmin was responsible for much of that increase. Charmin was changing the nation's toilet habits.

\*They're not talking about tissue wound on a roll, of course, but at one point in *Macbeth* the three witches cry out in unison, "The charm's wound up!" Perhaps the real Shakespearian parallel, if one is to be made at all, lies in the structural similarity of the Charmin commercial to the plots of the "problem comedies" *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well that Ends Well*, in which hypocritical tyrants and buffoons who make and enforce decrees against sexuality end up getting caught sneaking a squeeze on the sly themselves.

†In 1974, Proctor & Gamble spent \$3.8 million to advertise Charmin. The best recent account of how this \$5 billion company pays \$325 million a year to market its 42 brands of household products can be found in a special issue of *Television/Radio Age*—June 9, 1975.





# Marlboro



Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined  
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Philip Morris Incorporated

17 mg. "tar," 1.1 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Apr. '75



**M**eanwhile, a whole other war broke out in the advertising industry over the meaning of it all. At first Whipple had the worst of it: the new, hip wildman-genius types, and the cerebral, sophisticated, creative types all attacked the Charmin campaign and made it a symbol, a catchword, for all that was stupid, degrading and meretricious about the old-fashioned hard sell, particularly the hard sell school that believed simple irritation and reiteration were the key to consumer recall. "If I ever get a chance to meet the man who did those god-awful, terribly bad, 'Don't Squeeze the Charmin' commercials—and he turns out to be small—I just may slug him," said outspoken ad whiz Jerry Della Femina. (According to John Chervokas, who is not small, they've never met.)

But lately, the tables have been turned on the critics. Charmin and Whipple have been around so long, have been successful so long, that ad men of the old school are beginning to use the campaign against the clever young wiseguys, rubbing their noses in Charmin, chortling that the Whipple pitch proves that the so-called creative, softer-than-softsell stuff may win praise and awards but the old-fashioned abrasive hard sell makes the big bucks for the client. Just this year, Benton & Bowles took a big ad in *Advertising Age* to push this theme. It featured a sketch of Whipple looking far more censorious and meanspirited than he ever does in the actual commercials, almost as if he were sneering triumphantly at the hippie malcontents who criticize his ad. IT'S NOT CREATIVE UNLESS IT SELLS, the big type boasts.

It sells, but why? Arcane alternatives to the Simple Irritant Theory abound. The Sex in the Supermarket Theory advanced by Faith Popcorn, for instance. Popcorn, currently president of Brain-Reserve, an agency that makes use of some advanced new creative techniques, attributes the success of Charmin to the sensuality of the squeeze: "It established tactile contact between the consumer and the product, which is very rare in tele-

vision. It let's you experience the product right there in the store. It's the old, 'Lemme feel the material' thing, like people used to feel cloth before they bought it. Just that they let you squeeze it and touch it is a very sexy thing," she says. "Very, very sexy."

Then there's Professor Wilson Bryan Key, who thinks the whole secret is "soft stool." Professor Key is the author of a strange book called *Subliminal Seduction* (NAL) in which he allows that almost all print advertising is "embedded" with obscene words and pictures. "Mr. Whipple, with his bow tie and his effeminate mannerisms, is almost a perfect anal stereotype," Professor Key told me on the phone from Ontario where, he said, the University of Western Ontario had just fired him because of pressure from advertising agencies enraged at his book. "Go back and look at Freud's description of the anal personality. The idea of squeezing the tissue is the soft stool syndrome."

Dick Wilson has some less portentous theories about Whipple's phenomenal success. First of all, he rejects the idea that the Whipple series is old-fashioned and abrasive. He cites one TV breakthrough Whipple made in 1965: "Back then I was the first one to wear a moustache in a commercial." And he insists: "The stuff we do is not nauseating, it's cute." But the secret of Whipple's success, according to Wilson, is in the careful delineation of his character: "The director and I worked out his character between us, and we guard him very well. We'll try something and then say, 'No, no, Whipple wouldn't do that.' For instance we never let him be nasty. He's not nasty, he's prissy but he's not nasty."

**W**ilson himself is a likeable character, with the dignity of a vaudevillian who has aged well. I reached him by phone at a hotel in Kansas City where he was rehearsing a production of *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*. "I just finished making eleven new Charmin spots in L.A.," he said, "Four of them in Spanish, where I'm Senor Whipple. That makes 204 in all, although we've remade some of them every once in a while." Charmin has been good to Dick Wilson. He's a certified celebrity now. "I get instant recognition everywhere I go. I have these cards I hand out that have a picture of me and say, 'Don't Squeeze the Charmin. Squeeze Me.' And they do. I get a lot of squeezes that way." Procter & Gamble certainly squeezes the most out of Whipple. They pay him to travel around to supermarket openings, sales conventions, warehouses and factories to boost sales and morale. They even sell Whipple Tee-shirts.

However, a new round of escalation in the toilet-paper war is just beginning, and the possibility must be considered that P&G will come to consider Whipple a liability in the heat of the coming battle. He has his enemies out there. Feminists attack the Charmin commercial for degrading women; N.O.W. pickets at a recent P&G shareholders meeting called on the company to "Squeeze out Mr. Whipple." A nun in Wisconsin who relentlessly monitored 150 hours of soap-opera programming to prepare an analysis of P&G's treatment of women for a shareholder's group doesn't find Whipple nearly as degrading as some other P&G ads, "merely asinine," but Whipple has become an emblem of all that critics find wrong with P&G, with advertising in general, with American culture. Mr. Clean doesn't get that kind of bad press.

Meanwhile other brands have been taking aim at Charmin, homing in on certain vulnerabilities Whipple can't camouflage. First, there was Scott's "roller derby" commercial, which pictures a "race" between two frantically unwinding rolls of tissue: Scott and a roll identified as "the other leading brand," clearly Charmin. Scott always loses the "roller derby" because, the spot points out, Scott Tissue has a full 1,000 sheets to unwind from its roll while the other leading brand has only 650.

While Scott was skillfully exploiting Charmin's short-sheeted disadvantages among one-ply tissues (Charmin claims it can't fit as many

sheets on a roll without the roll swelling to monstrous size because each of its sheets are fluffier than ordinary one-plys), an aggressive East Coast two-ply tissue named Marcal was attacking the apparent flimsiness of one-ply Charmin in comparison with a good two-ply. The Marcal spot mentions Charmin by name and consists of a demonstration in which a sheet of Charmin held up in front of a candle flame is found to be so diaphanous as to be almost transparent, while a sheet of Marcal virtually blocks the light with its staunch two-ply thickness.


Nor were the Whipple commercials responding effectively to these challenges. In fact, they seemed to have lost direction in the past couple of years. There were excursions into Whipple's home life which seem designed to lay to rest suspicions that there was something deviant about his devotion to Charmin. Not all these efforts to promote Whipple's wholesomeness were totally successful. One short-lived spot introduced us to Whipple's own mother, who was played by Wilson himself in Whipple drag: "I shaved my mustache off, dressed in girl's clothes and a white wig and high-heeled shoes and everything else that went with it," Wilson recalled. "They pulled that off the air fast. It was cute but a little grotesque." Then, in early 1974, the copy line for the spots underwent an odd change. A Charmin storyboard filed with the FTC and dated December 1, 1973 describes Charmin as "Deep Down Squeezably Soft." Now I'd never been able to figure out deep down where it was squeezably soft, but the new copy line is even more puzzling. It describes Charmin's softness as "rich and fluffy"—language whose evocation of taste would be more appropriate to an Oreo creme filling than to a roll of toilet tissue. And in some of the more recent commercials, strange things are seen to be going on within Whipple's own psyche.

"Whipple's Dream" opens with Whipple and three ladies flagrantly squeezing Charmin together, with Whipple brazenly declaring "Charmin's so rich and fluffy it's irresistible," as he squeezes away. Well, it turns out Whipple's actually at home in bed with his wife who shakes him into realizing this debauch is only a dream. "Ooh that explains it," Whipple says. "I'd never squeeze Charmin while I was awake." "Certainly not George," says the wife, who then reveals that Whipple has taken a roll of Charmin to bed with him to squeeze. "Whipple's Temptation," dated Jan. 1 in the FTC files, presents Whipple vigorously urged by a devilish figure to go ahead and squeeze the Charmin, while a haloed Whipple conscience feebly opposes the squeeze. Whipple succumbs, right before our eyes.

Does this new predilection of Whipple for fevered religious visions and erotic dreams reflect a psyche under severe strain after all those years of repression and guilt over forbidden pleasures? Why was Whipple doing things like taking rolls of tissue to bed with him? Why was he permitted full frontal squeezes rather than the sneaky ones on the sly? The answer, I'm afraid, is that Whipple may be going through the same last-chance testing period they gave Gentle the Dog. Because a decade has passed and all signs indicate that Procter & Gamble is getting ready to introduce another toilet paper development that may equal or exceed the hot air fluffing that Whipple made famous. At this very moment in certain sections of America, P&G is slipping onto supermarket shelves a new-new Charmin that represents a whole new concept in softer-than-softer-than-soft.

It's a tricky new marketing ploy, so try to follow closely. New-new Charmin takes the same weight of paper pulp as old-new Charmin to make a roll. However, a roll of New-new Charmin has only 500 sheets instead of the 650 in old-new Charmin. That means there is more paper pulp per sheet on each of the 500 sheets than before this improvement. So each sheet is somewhat thicker and the hot air blower dryers have even more pulp fuzz to puff up. So what results is 500 extra-fluffy, plush, feather-pillow type sheets of tissue, but 150 fewer sheets for the money. In some markets—Northern California, Oregon and St. Louis, among others—P&G is reportedly testing an extra-extra-

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plush sheet of toilet tissue with only 400 sheets of plumped up, pulpy tissue per roll.

The object here is to convince the consumer that fewer plush sheets will last just as long as more, flimsier sheets. P&G refuses to discuss marketing strategy, but a spokesman for Scott, which is also coming out with an extra-plush one-ply to be called "Cottenelle" (soft as cotton), puts it this way: "The assumption in all these new tissues is that people grab off what feels right in their hand, so if you have thicker sheets you have a thicker feeling in your hand from fewer sheets and you won't use as many."

A consumer affairs commissioner in New York's Suffolk County, where some of the new, plush Charmin is being tested in the supermarkets, claims that Charmin's explanation of the reduction in sheet-count was just a lot of hot air and pulp. "If they did do market research I would like to know the parameters they used—used sheets?" says Commissioner James Lack, who threatened to take civil action against Charmin for misleading the public. "I maintain people use the same number of sheets that they started to use when their toilet habits were born," Lask said. "My staff researched this on an informal basis and the number of sheets doesn't change. I don't like corporations hiding

misleading facts." Whatever the facts, if P&G does decide to go full force into the plush and extra-plush toilet market it's going to be a tough advertising job.

Does P&G think that Whipple, with all his notoriety, his enemies and his 10-year-old pitch can handle the new responsibility? There's one spot being tested on the air right now which already seems to be easing him off center stage. The people at the Television Monitoring Institute of Huntington Station Long Island brought it to my attention. (They make their living taping TV commercials and programming 'round the dial 'round the clock, often for ad agencies who want to know what their competitors are putting on.) This new spot plugs the new plush Charmin being introduced into Long Island supermarkets with a promise never before made in toilet paper advertising: "You can hear the difference in New Charmin." (Since you can already smell it, feel it, see it, and it's so "rich," you can almost taste it, what was left but to hear it?)

But even more interesting than the sound of the roll, is the size of the role they've given Whipple. The ladies in the market take up the opening moments of the spot chatting about New Charmin and listening to it. Whipple comes on to deliver a rather perfunctory version of his litany: "Ladies, I

don't care if you can see, hear, feel or smell the difference, but please don't squeeze it." His only line in the spot, barely a walk on. He's not given the opportunity to deliver his customary soliloquy on the squeeze; instead a preemptory voice breaks in, says "Excuse me, Mr. Whipple," cuts him off and takes over the difficult job of explaining the improvement in the new plush product. Whipple merely seems to be in everyone's way. And if this indignity is not enough, I've heard reliable reports that in one spot being tested the script actually calls for Whipple to urge the ladies to squeeze the Charmin.

When I heard that sad bit of news, I began to wonder seriously if Whipple was on the way out. If he's not there to tell people *not* to squeeze, any jerk can tell them to *listen* to the toilet paper or whatever the client wants. I wondered if P&G was testing to see if anyone noticed, if anyone cared any more that Whipple *didn't* care if they squeezed. I called up Whipple, I mean Wilson, in California, and asked if it were true that in a new spot he actually does urge the women to go ahead and squeeze.

"Yes it's true," he said, "But it's only a test, it's only one spot."

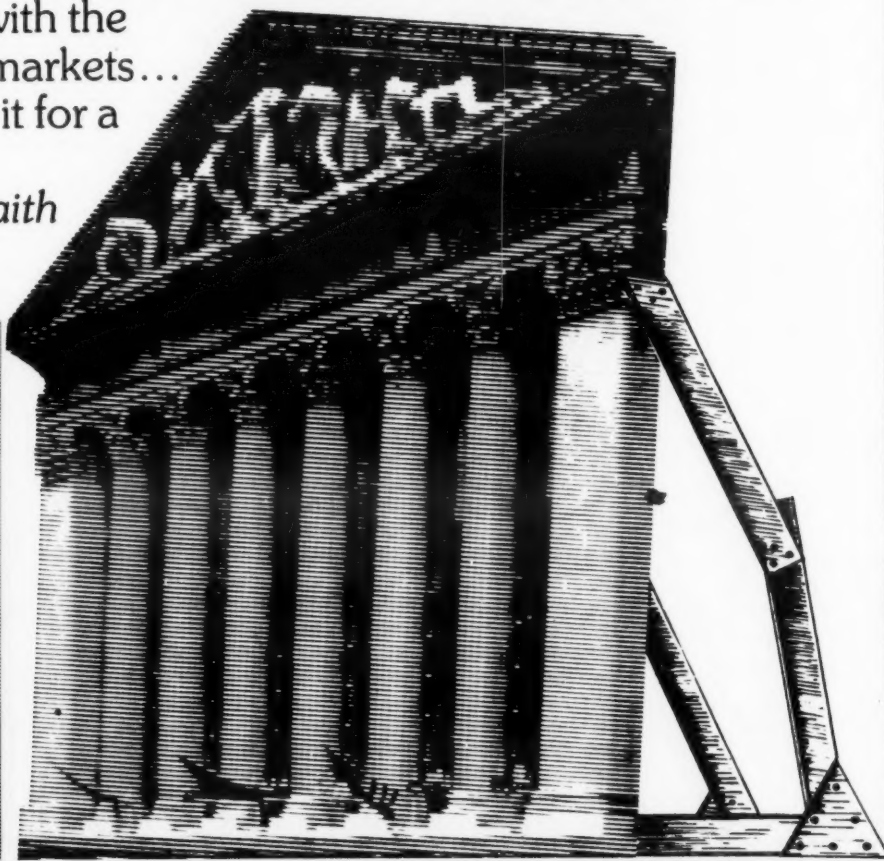
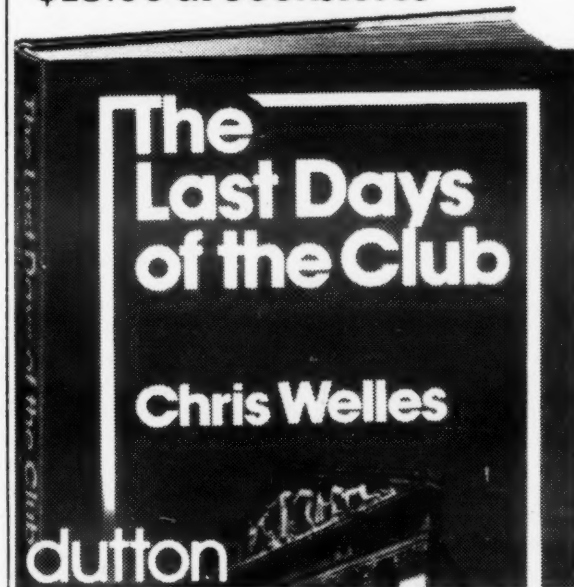
I hope so. After all these years, I'd hate to see Whipple go the way of Gentle The Dog. ■

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# Violence In The Morning

**The wrecked presses and strike at *The Washington Post* drew surprise and outrage from most quarters. But, argues the author, the issue of class is central and the pressman's vandalism is not nearly so inexplicable as many accounts have made it seem.**

BY PATRICK OWENS

Call them the natives-are-restless stories. Sudanese bushmen, or New Mexican Apaches, or Detroit's lumpenproletariat suddenly rise up and, for no visible reason, lay waste to their neighborhoods, attack the management, utter strange and irreverent imprecations and generally threaten to ruin such of civilization as it has been their good fortune to experience. When I was a lad, the Dukhobors of Canada were often restless. With the fit upon them, they would offer up dark mutterings and burn down their own houses. I never did find out what made the Dukhobors restless; it is a piece of scholarship I have neglected.

The natives have been restless in Washington this fall—the natives in this case being the pressmen who operated the presses at *The Washington Post*. Initially, their restlessness, which led them to sabotage the presses on which they earned their livelihood, was as mysterious in the press accounts as the restlessness of the Dukhobors or the Apaches. No one covering the story in the first several days, when public opinion congealed against the pressmen, could understand why they had done such a thing. I first learned of the pressmen's restlessness from *The New York Times* of Oct. 2. Ben A. Franklin, a veteran *Times* reporter with an extraordinary sensitivity to the problems of working people, had written what seemed to me a very strange story. It started this way:

Washington, Oct. 1—The *Washington Post*, the nation's seventh-largest newspaper, was forced to cease publication by what company officials called an anti-management outburst of vandalism in its pressroom by striking members of a pressmen's union. All the Post's 72 printing units were said to have been sabotaged.

The pre-dawn vandalism and arson in the basement and subbasement of the Post's downtown building at 16th and L Streets, N.W., was followed this afternoon by an angry jostling and name-calling confrontation between picketing pressmen and members of the Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, the editorial and clerical union. Many Guild members said they were crossing the picket line to protest what had happened in the pressroom.

Franklin had made a pass at the union side of these events. He quoted James A. Dugan, the president of Newspaper Web Pressmen's Local 6 of Washington, as saying that the union had not authorized the sabotage. Then he quoted Dugan as saying:

"Anything that has happened the management must take full responsibility for . . . They have harassed and reprimanded the men. They want to change the manning tables and our hiring practices. They were stalling since December on a new contract. We had not even gotten to wages. The men were upset."

So far as I was aware, the damage in the *Post* pressroom was the worst labor-connected vandalism to be visited upon an American newspaper since Oct. 1, 1910, when *The Los Angeles Times* building was dynamited, with the loss of 20 lives. Still, I had trouble understanding how serious it was. The *Post* said, in a statement quoted by Franklin, that the damage

"appears to have been executed by people who had pre-planned and synchronized their actions . . . It would be impossible for these kinds of damage to be done in that short a time without a plan, without assigned tasks and without people who knew precisely what they were doing."

Newspaper pressmen have had a lot of trouble with

Patrick Owens, a columnist for *Newsday*, is a veteran labor reporter who has sat on both sides of the bargaining table over the years.

a lot of newspaper publishers in recent years. So have the other newspaper craft workers and their unions. Yet none had destroyed the equipment on which they worked. This was a form of economic masochism, for there would be no jobs for pressmen while their presses were being repaired. Franklin did not make this obvious point. Why had the pressmen destroyed their means of livelihood?

*The Washington Star* did little to answer that question in its extensive coverage Oct. 2. It did quote the anonymous leader of another craft union as saying he had informed the pressmen he did not condone their action. "It doesn't make sense to destroy your own job," the *Star* reported him as saying. This struck me as another standard occurrence in natives-are-restless coverage. It was the Washington, 1975, equivalent of tracking down a Navajo chief in 1896 so that the chief could explain that not even he, a fellow savage, knew what in the world had got into the Apaches.

The *Star* also printed a long story Oct. 1. This did not resolve the mystery, but it did offer some clues to an old labor skate like myself. For one thing, Lawrence A. Wallace, the *Post* vice president for labor relations, had broken off contract talks with the pressmen at 9:30 p.m. the night before. The local's contract was to expire two-and-one-half hours later. Labor and management representatives traditionally go through at least the motions of bargaining right down to the contract expiration or strike deadline to preserve the impression that they care greatly about a settlement. In terms of labor etiquette, it had to be assumed that Wallace was telling the pressmen the *Post* was ready for a rumble.

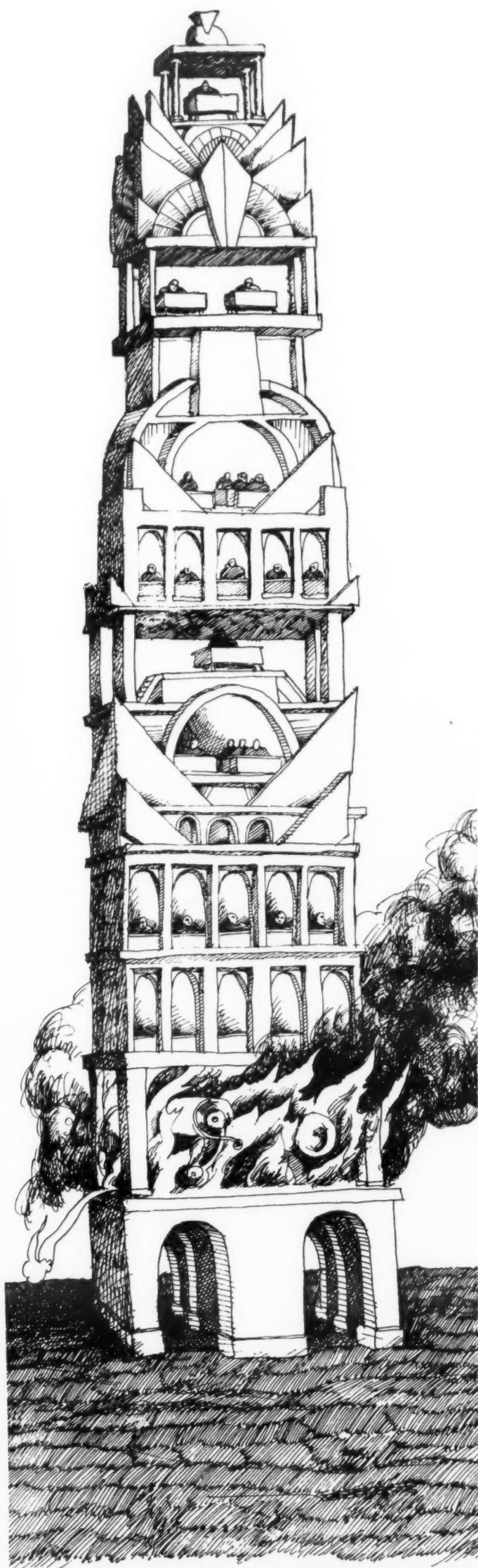
The *Post* was dark a single day. Then it began publishing at non-union, offset dailies as far as 150 miles from Washington, using helicopters to ferry prepared page plates to the pressrooms it had contracted. *Post* management could hardly be expected to fold its tent in the wake of the press wrecking. But the paper was doing a good deal more than simply getting itself out. Without much in the way of explanation that I could find, the *Post* was setting out to break the pressmen's strike. None of the newspaper reports appeared to find this particularly intriguing. In the next several days, the *Post* got a number of its presses back in action and was able to dispense with the friendly non-union presses of its allies in the exurbs and hinterland. This process, too, was reported without much curiosity about what, exactly, was going on here.

After Mark J. Meagher held a news conference Oct. 11, however, the light began to dawn. As Franklin reported in the *Times* the next day:

Evidence of the *Post*'s determination to exercise "the right to publish" emerged clearly for the first time yesterday when Mark J. Meagher, the 40-year-old accountant who is the newspaper's executive vice president and general manager, told newsmen in an hour-long conversation of the paper's secret two-year preparation of a "contingency plan" to shield itself from an expected production workers' strike. The preparation included the training of production and other workers—including some women—to substitute for pressmen, paperhandlers, photoengravers and typesetters . . .

"These were propositions that we knew the unions—the pressmen particularly—were going to find difficult to accept," Mr. Meagher said. " . . . The *Post* made a conscious decision that, if we were going to have parity at the bargaining table, we were going to have to have the ability to publish [during a strike]."

(continued on page 18)





# Death In The Afternoon?

**The Washington Star has improved markedly since Texas millionaire Joe Allbritton rode to the rescue a year ago. But the mortality rate of evening newspapers in recent years suggests that the hard economic facts are very much against the paper's survival.**

Robert Neubecker

BY A. KENT MACDOUGALL

One day last July close readers of *The Washington Star* were treated to four major stories with identical bylines—but different datelines. The bylines all belonged to Henry S. Bradsher. The datelines were Bonn, Auschwitz, Warsaw and Krakow, and the indefatigable Bradsher's feat typifies the hustle that has energized the *Star* under the year-old management of publisher Joe L. Allbritton and editor James G. Bellows. Like many No. 2s, the *Star* is trying harder. It has repackaged its contents, added new features, brassily promoted itself as more lively, readable and relevant and, since Oct. 1, fattened considerably at the expense of the strike-shrivelled *Washington Post*. Yet for all the undeniable improvements, the *Star* remains, like Henry Bradsher's rapid fire reports on President Ford's trip to Helsinki, a conventional and largely unsatisfying daily newspaper. More important, for all the money, talent and effort being expended to save the *Star*, it is fighting what may well be a losing battle against the hard economic facts of newspaper publishing today.

These are that work and shopping patterns, population shifts and reader and advertiser preferences favor morning newspapers in big cities. As Leo Bogart, general manager of the Newspaper Advertising Bureau, has noted, "big city evening papers have fared far less well than the morning papers both in circulation and advertising, and both in the competitive markets and in the non-competitive ones." *The Washington Star's* troubles, then, are not an isolated phenomenon but part of a nationwide trend.

One wouldn't know this, of course, from the media's extensive but superficial coverage of the *Star* since Allbritton rode to the rescue last year. Most stories have focused on the irony of the new-money Houston banker bailing out the old-money Noyes, Kauffmann and Adams families, who had owned and managed the paper for more than a century. With the notable exception of newspaper stock analyst Lee E. Dirks, whose associate, John Morton, wrote "Saving the *Star*," an excellent assessment of the situation in the November *Washingtonian* magazine, writers tackling the *Star* have failed to ask why the most affluent and fastest-growing of the nation's 10 largest metropolitan areas, the political and news capital of the country, cannot seem to support two daily newspapers when dozens of smaller, less prosperous and less important cities manage.

Is it that the *Star* is a bad newspaper? That could have been said of the *Washington Daily News*, the Scripps-Howard tabloid that died in 1972. But not of the *Star*. "It certainly is one of the best, if not the best, evening paper[s] in the country." So said Benjamin C. Bradlee, executive editor of *The Washington Post*, just before Allbritton entered the picture. Bradlee was being kind, but not overly so. By the undistinguished standards of evening journalism, the *Star* was—and is—a superior product.

But in the battle for evening survival, editorial quality is of secondary significance. *The Washington Post* probably would have become dominant even if it weren't nearly as good a paper as it is. The *Post* half-admits as much. In an elaborate multi-slide presentation for prospective advertisers, the

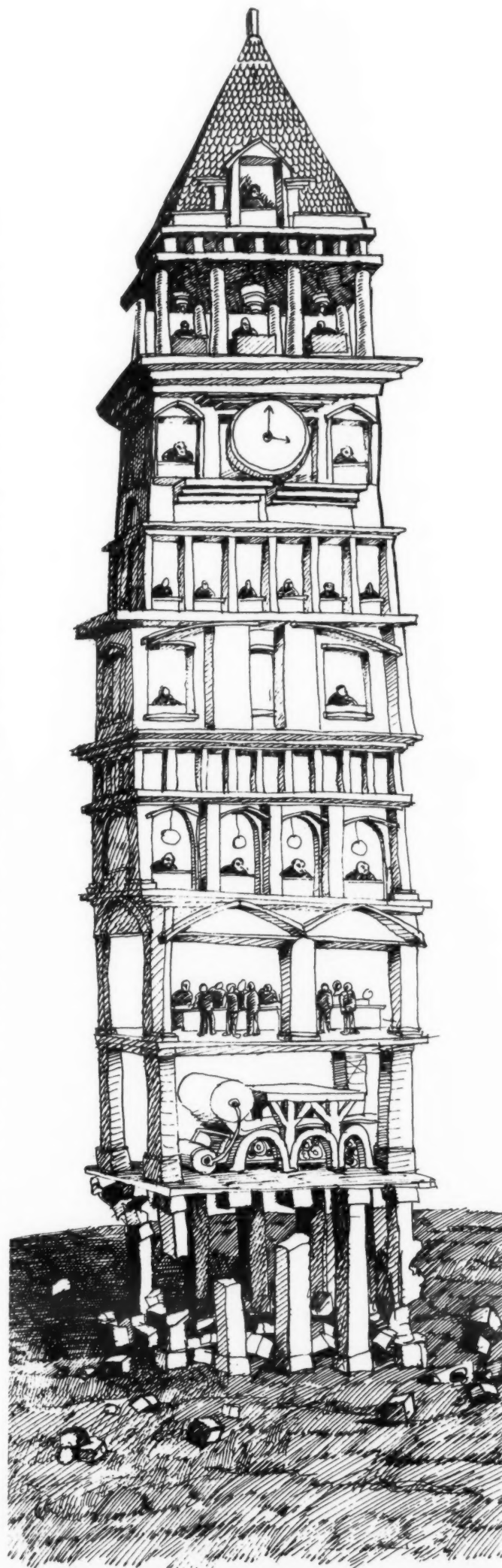
*Post* declares that "trends throughout the country suggest that the leadership of the *Post* was inevitable, because a morning newspaper better fits into Washington's social and economic lifestyles."

On the surface, Washington seems the ideal newspaper town, with plenty of room for two mediocre newspapers, let alone two good ones like the *Post* and the *Star*, no matter what time of day or night they are published. There is no shortage of news to report, nor well-heeled and well-educated citizens to buy and read newspapers. Even blacks are relatively prosperous in Washington. The suburbs include two of the nation's richest counties—Montgomery in Maryland and Fairfax in Virginia. Annual household income in the Washington metropolitan area was estimated last year at \$18,295, highest among large urban areas. One in every four adults is a college graduate, compared with less than one in five in San Francisco and less than one in seven in New York. Population in metropolitan Washington has more than doubled in 20 years, to the present 3.1 million. The federal government, one of the country's few boom industries in these hard times, employs one of every four area workers directly and many more indirectly. As a consequence, the recession's impact has been relatively mild in and around Washington.

If the *Star* isn't sharing in the general prosperity it is largely because, as an evening paper, it is less well suited than a morning paper to the lifestyles of the white-collar and other service-industry workers who predominate in the area. Evening papers are popular with factory, construction and other blue-collar workers who get off work early enough in the afternoon to read them, but who leave for work in the morning before a morning paper can be delivered. Evening papers do best in heavily industrialized cities such as Philadelphia, Detroit and Milwaukee. Morning papers tend to dominate in service-industry cities such as New York, Washington and San Francisco. This is because office, store and other service workers usually start work later than factory workers. They have time for the morning paper with breakfast. However, they leave work late in the afternoon and arrive home with little time for the evening paper before dinner, Walter Cronkite and other diversions. Metropolitan Washington has proportionately fewer factory workers and more service workers than any other major urban area. This tips the advantage sharply to the morning *Post* over the evening *Star*.

The *Post* has another distinct advantage: It distributes its papers at night when traffic is light and delivery trucks can move freely. The *Star* distributes during the day when streets are congested. Daytime traffic was manageable 25 years ago when most *Star* readers lived in or near the city. But the urban sprawl that has disfigured the rolling Maryland and Virginia countryside has put more and more readers farther and farther out. Nearly half the *Star's* home subscribers live beyond the Beltway, a limited access highway that encircles Washington six to 14 miles from the *Star's* inner city plant.

To reach distant suburbs in time to drop off bundles of papers so carriers can make their rounds right after school, *Star* trucks set out before noon with the 11 a.m. edition. Subscribers in the District of Columbia get the 1 p.m. edition, with 11:30 a.m. stock market prices. No reader gets to see the closing stock prices because the final edition goes to press at 2:45 p.m., before the market



A. Kent MacDougall, the editor of *The Press: A Critical Look From The Inside* (Dow Jones), is an associate professor of communication at American University in Washington, D.C.

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closes. Like most evening papers, *The Washington Star* is an evening paper in name only.

The *Star* also faces especially severe competition from broadcasting for readers' attention and advertisers' budgets. The homebound commuter can get later news on his car radio than in the *Star* awaiting him at home. Once in his easy chair, he can watch an hour and a half of local news, starting at 5:30 p.m., before Cronkite comes on at 7. Not surprisingly, more and more families across the country are getting along these days with one newspaper a day—usually a morning paper.

**T**o be sure, not all morning papers have prospered. The *New York Herald Tribune* died in 1966, the *Boston Herald-Traveler* in 1972 and the *Toledo Times* just this year. But many more afternoon papers have succumbed. Scripps-Howard alone has put five weak evening papers out of their misery since 1964—in Houston, Indianapolis, New York, Washington and Fort Worth. The net result of all this evening newspaper travail has been a 26 per cent decline in evening circulation in the 25 largest cities between 1954 and 1974, while weekday morning circulation slipped only 3 per cent. If the 1954-74 circulation gain of the morning but national *Wall Street Journal* is included, morning circulation actually rose.

It is a truism in the newspaper business that a newspaper must first gain dominance in circulation before it can gain dominance in the thing that really counts—advertising. With ad revenue outstripping circulation revenue \$3 to \$1 at the average daily, the jury that pronounces sentence of life or death on a daily newspaper is a jury of advertisers, not the public.

*The Washington Post* gained dominance in circulation in one maneuver. In 1954, *Post* owner Eugene Meyer wrote out a check for \$8.5 million to buy and then junk the *Post's* morning competitor, the *Washington Times-Herald*. The seller was the ailing axe-grinder, Col. Robert R. McCormick, of *The Chicago Tribune*. The *Post* picked up the popular *Tribune* comic strips the *Times-Herald* had carried, and managed to keep many *Times-Herald* readers. Before the *Times-Herald* died, the *Star* outsold the *Post* 234,000 to 201,000 weekdays and 264,000 to 200,000 on Sunday. Catapulting ahead of the *Star*, the *Post* steadily widened its lead. At last audited count, October 1974 to March 1975, the *Post* was outselling the *Star* 536,000 to 369,000 weekdays and 725,000 to 350,000 on Sunday.

It took the *Post* five years after gaining dominance in circulation to gain dominance in advertising. It passed the *Star* in ad lineage in 1959 and kept right on going. The *Star*, meanwhile, stood still. By 1973 the *Star* was carrying the same ad volume it had carried in 1959, while the *Post* had nearly doubled its lineage. (Since 1973, the recession has cut into both newspapers' ad volume.)

Conventional wisdom holds that the *Post* widened its circulation lead, and thereby its advertising lead, with a combination of thorough news coverage and literate editorials. Meanwhile, goes the theory, the lackluster *Star* lagged in news coverage and repelled sophisticated Washingtonians with cranky-conservative editorials and letters to the editor. Adjectives applied by news-magazine writers to describe the *Star* during the 1950s and 1960s include "stuffy," "crusty" and "fusty." "Encrusted with family tradition" is another putdown, connoting the nepotism that provided jobs at the *Star* for various sons, uncles, brothers-in-law and other members of the Noyes and Kauffmann families. As summarized by Joseph C. Goulden in the first of two profiles of the *Star* he wrote for the *Washingtonian*, the *Star* was "accused of many things: aloofness from blacks; a gradualistic approach to civil rights more appropriate to Dixie than to D.C.; unblinking endorsement of hardline Vietnam policies; toadyish friendship with incumbent administrations; in sum, a 'respectable' status quo conservatism, to the right of Rockefeller, to the left of the *Chicago Tribune*."

These charges were largely true, of course, and yet *The Washington Star* was also the paper that let iconoclastic liberal Mary McGrory have her



Joe Allbritton

Washington Star News

say, that covered several subjects with distinction, and whose reporters won four Pulitzer Prizes in a stretch of nine years (1958-1966) while *Post* staffers could not manage to pick up a single Pulitzer in 13 years. (Since 1966, the *Post* has pulled ahead, 6 to 3.)

If the old *Star* wasn't that bad, the old *Post* wasn't that good. Indeed, the *Post* was just another all-right paper until Ben Bradlee came in as managing editor in 1965, raised salaries, hired stars away from other papers (including Haynes Johnson from the *Star*), started a "Style" section and improved the news coverage.

Making a morning paper like the *Post* informative and authoritative is considerably easier than doing the same for an evening paper like the *Star*. The *Post* publishes at the end of the day, after all the news is in. The *Star* publishes in the morning and early afternoon when the news of the day is still being made. The *Post* skims the cream, the *Star* gets the leavings the next day. The clear superiority of the a.m. news cycle is reflected in the fact that of the 10 best dailies picked by *Time* in 1974, all but two, *Newsday* and the *Milwaukee Journal*, are morning papers. (The "all-day" *Boston Globe* is predominately a morning paper.)

Just as *The Washington Post* bought and junked the *Times-Herald* in 1954 to gain a morning monopoly, the *Star* bought and junked the *Washington Daily News* in 1972 in hopes that an evening monopoly would give it a comparable boost. The *Star* owners figured on benefiting from eliminating a competitor for circulation and advertising, and writers on the situation accepted this as a foregone conclusion. But as analysts Lee Dirks and John Morton have pointed out, "the *Daily News* acquisition has brought much higher costs without greatly higher revenues."

This came about because the 100,000-plus *Daily News* readers who switched allegiance to the *Star* were not the free-spending white suburbanites advertisers most want to reach, but largely lower-echelon government workers and inner city residents.

*Star* advertisers balked at paying much higher ad rates to reach these poorer prospects. As a consequence, the *Star* was unable to raise its ad rates enough to offset the sharply higher newsprint and other costs incurred in jumping its circulation from 302,000 in 1971 to 416,000 at the end of 1972. Nor did the *Star* pick up much additional advertising from the *Daily News*. That skimpy tabloid's advertisers didn't want to pay the *Star's* higher ad rates, and most of the 14 million lines of advertising the *Daily News* had carried in 1971 evaporated.

Another major move the Kauffmann-Noyes management took, in May 1974, was to switch the *Star* on Saturday from a p.m. to an a.m. paper.

Saturday afternoon editions made sense in the days when most people worked a six-day week, but have long since become a liability. Retail stores, closed on Sunday, simply aren't interested in reaching people with only a couple of shopping hours left on Saturday. The result nearly everywhere has been advertising-poor, money-losing Saturday afternoon editions. Papers beside the *Star* that have belatedly shed tradition and switched to Saturday morning publication include the *Detroit News*, *Houston Chronicle* and, just this September, the *Dallas Times Herald*.

Being on a more sensible news cycle than before has made the Saturday morning *Washington Star* a more significant newspaper than its afternoon predecessor used to be. But it also is head to head with the Saturday morning *Post*, reminding readers which paper delivers the most for 15 cents. Moreover, the *Star* doesn't even collect 15 cents from everyone for the Saturday edition, giving it away without charge to Sunday-only subscribers. This is great for circulation, but disastrous for the bottom line. With moves like this, it is little wonder the *Star* continues to sink deeper into red ink. From less than \$1 million in 1970, losses mounted to \$4.5 million in 1971, \$5.1 million in 1972, \$5 million in 1973, \$7.7 million in 1974 and \$1 million a month in 1975 (until the *Post* was struck in October).

**H**ow much more Joe Allbritton can take only he and his accountant know. Buying out the overwhelmed Kauffmanns and Noyeses and Adamases, lending the *Star* money and assuming its debt has increased the Texas financier's commitment to more than \$50 million. For that, besides the *Star*, he hopes to get profitable broadcast properties worth an estimated \$40 million. They include television stations in Washington, Lynchburg, Va., and Charleston, S.C., and radio stations in Washington and Lynchburg. The Federal Communications Commission has a policy against a newspaper owner acquiring a broadcast outlet in the same market. It would have to waive that rule for Allbritton to take possession of the TV and radio outlets in Washington. Conceivably, the FCC will take this unusual step because of the squeeze Allbritton is in. But even if the deal goes through, the \$3 million to \$4 million the five stations have earned in recent years would hardly offset the *Star's* recent losses.

Not surprisingly, the continuing recession has not helped Allbritton's rescue efforts. When business falls off anywhere, advertisers routinely concentrate their reduced spending in the dominant newspaper. Enjoying economy of scale, the dominant paper can charge lower ad rates in proportion to circulation and is therefore a better buy. It also penetrates the market more deeply. In Washington, the recession has made the dominant daily even more dominant, though the *Post* has lost a lot of lineage, too. In the first nine months of this year the *Post* carried 58.1 million ad lines, off 7.4 per cent from a year earlier. The *Star* ran 25.3 million lines, down 17.2 per cent. Since the strike, of course, *Post* lineage has plummeted while *Star* ad volume has risen sharply.

Allbritton is pinning his hopes for a turnaround on improving the *Star's* "demographics." Present readers, on the average, are older and less affluent than *Post* readers. This turns advertisers off. Deciding at the outset that the *Star* had to redirect its editorial appeal toward the younger, free-spending readers whom advertisers most covet, Allbritton brought in James Bellows from *The Los Angeles Times* to direct the editorial re-vamping.

Bellows' chief accomplishment has been a slick repackaging job. Acting on the assumption that "people really don't like news—it disturbs them," Bellows has made over the front page to give it a quieter, more predictable look and a reassuring feel. Inspired by *The Wall Street Journal's* unchanging page-one formula of three in-depth articles, Bellows started a question-and-answer interview column on the left side of page one and spread an "In Focus" situationer across the bot-



tom. Inside, he made things easier to find by anchoring features in the same place every day—Mary McGrory's column on Page three, for instance.

Columns have been added to round up national news, foreign news and personalities in the news. A prominently displayed television column accords that rival medium the full recognition most readers give it. And a new gossip column, "The Ear," coyly reports such titillating tidbits as: "Ear hears that a reporter covering the President's trip to Helsinki came back with three stitches in an Unlikely Place. It seems the reporter sought female companionship, and his female companion eventually bit him. Ear is blushing."

Another Bellows innovation is a "writer-in-residence" program. The first writer to arrive, for a month last summer, was Queens brawler Jimmy Breslin. He lost no time in insulting government workers with a column about two imaginary slackers, GS-13 and GS-11, and also took pokes at two *Star* columnists: Crosby Noyes, for aloof writing, and James J. Kilpatrick, for "using the style which once made him such a terrific press secretary for Jefferson Davis." Breslin was followed by Dick Schaap, whose uncritical effusions on the Ali-Forman fight (that "magnificent mauling"), the World Series and other athletic entertainments offended no one. Both Breslin and Schaap are old pals of Bellows from the *New York Herald Tribune*, which Bellows edited until its death, and their selection indicates his cautious approach to innovation.

A new editorial page editor, Edwin M. Yoder Jr., has moved editorial policy closer to the views of middle-of-the-road Democrat Allbritton. Yet backlash editorials, such as one advocating public high schools be turned over to private enterprise, still appear occasionally. Topping off the new package are the often liberal, justifiably acclaimed editorial cartoons of Patrick Oliphant, who was hired away from the *Denver Post*.

The centerward drift of the editorial page and the more lively, more open news pages have combined to move the *Star* closer to the *Post* in style and spirit. But the *Star* still lags in substance. This is no surprise considering that the *Post* has 380 fulltime news employees, while more than 200 of the *Star*'s 270 newsroom staffers are on a four-day work week to help keep the paper alive. This short staffing helps explain why the *Star* seems to be carrying less hard news than it did a few years ago. It also explains why the front page In Focus and Q & A features often fall short of the reporting and deft editing required for their full realization.

Given the handicaps he has labored under, Jim Bellows has done about as good a job in the year he has been at the *Star* as could be expected. He has given the *Star* a new vitality and direction. He talks about the need for a "special identity"—"it won't do us any good to be looked on as a warmed-over *Washington Post*." And he has defined that special identity as "a paper that makes sense out of the news" and helps readers "make sense out of their daily lives."

It is unlikely, though, that Bellows has anything too unconventional in mind. One can carry a newspaper's "special identity" too far. Too much of a special identity in fairly homogenous Washington and environs would jeopardize the 350,000 circulation that Allbritton has set as the minimum required to return the *Star* to profitable operation. New York can support three dailies of different character, but Washington can barely support two much closer types. The affluent, proper suburbanites the *Star* needs to improve its demographic profile would be unlikely to approve of anything too different from what they are getting now.

What they are getting now, of course, is the *Post*. This is the big hitch in Allbritton's game plan. The affluent suburbanites the *Star* is seeking as readers are largely *Post* readers now. Either the *Star* must get them to drop the *Post* or, going against the nationwide trend to one-newspaper households, add the *Star*. Either way will be difficult. Some *Post* readers have discovered the *Star* during the pressmen's strike at the *Post*, but

whether they will stick with it remains to be seen.

From 359,000 on the eve of the strike, the *Star*'s circulation soon jumped to nearly 400,000, making up much of the erosion since weekday sales peaked at 420,000 in early 1973. Advertising soared more than 50 per cent over the level in early October of last year. However, as the *Post* put its presses back into operation and began turning out plump issues again, the *Star* started shrinking toward its customary emaciation.

Failure to retain a good chunk of the windfall provided by the strike could present Joe Allbritton with three choices: 1) sell the *Star*, 2) convert it to a five-day paper produced by the *Post* under a joint operating agreement or 3) fold it. Selling the *Star* would be difficult, given its money-losing ways. About the only outsider who has expressed interest, Michigan newspaper chain owner John McGoff, has made a lot of noise but only an inferior offer. Converting the *Star* to a weekday only paper produced by the *Post* would reduce the *Star* in stature and lock it into permanent subordination. Such a move would require *Post* collaboration and Justice Department approval. The Justice Department would have to rule the *Star* a failing newspaper under the Newspaper Preservation Act. This would permit a joint operating agreement under which Allbritton would retain editorial independence while merging the *Star*'s business and mechanical operations with the *Post*'s ("Nothing Succeeds Like Failure"—June 1975).

Folding the *Star* would be a last resort, of course. It would cost Allbritton much of his investment and a couple of thousand employees their jobs. It would also send politicians to their podiums and editorial writers to their typewriters to lament the passing of yet another fixture of American journalism. Even *The Washington Post* would be sorry. With no major competitor left to best, *Post* ad salesmen and executives would find it harder to justify their high salaries. With no second "voice" in the nation's capital, *Post* editors and management would risk taking even more heat from unfriendly politicians than they got from the Nixon gang. Never mind that since Nixon left office and Allbritton took over the *Star* the two papers have spoken on most major issues with practically the same, soft, non-obstructionist voice.

**U**nder competitive capitalism, which both papers accept as the best of all available worlds, newspapers have no more claim to immortality than meat packers, toy manufacturers, hardware stores and other businesses. Evening papers sprang up in the 1870s and 1880s to cater to women shoppers and homeward bound factory workers with store ads and late news by telegraph. They made sense in an industrial economy. But with the shift since World War II to a service-dominated economy, big city evening papers may be nearing the end of their useful lives. The public has too little time to read them, and advertisers prefer a single omnibus daily to competing morning and afternoon papers.

Instead of two full-service, seven-day newspapers largely duplicating each other, Washington might be better served by the general interest *Post* for both city and suburbs and a new special interest second daily for the city alone. Such a new paper could concentrate on now-neglected District of Columbia news, news of interest to government employees, consumer protection pieces and other service pieces. Produced by photo offset in a small, streamlined plant, such a paper might be made to turn a profit with as little as 100,000 circulation and a modest amount of advertising.

Life goes on. The magazine industry bounced back stronger than ever from the deaths of the general interest giants, *Life*, *Look*, and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Indeed, their demise freed up ad dollars for new special-interest magazines, which added diversity, if little distinction, to the nation's newsstands. If worst comes to worst and *The Washington Star* disappears, perhaps some good will come of it, too. Perhaps something even more useful will take its place.

# THE FIRST CASUALTY

From the Crimea to Vietnam:  
The War Correspondent  
as Hero, Propagandist,  
and Myth Maker

PHILLIP KNIGHTLEY

"It is the book  
I wish every-  
one I talk to  
these days  
had read."

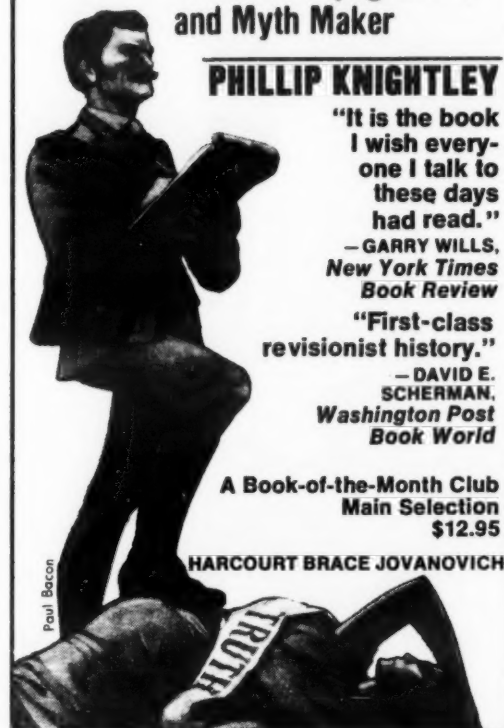
—GARRY WILLS,  
*New York Times*  
Book Review

"First-class  
revisionist history."

—DAVID E.  
SCHERMAN,  
*Washington Post*  
Book World

A Book-of-the-Month Club  
Main Selection  
\$12.95

HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVIH



# UNANIMITY!

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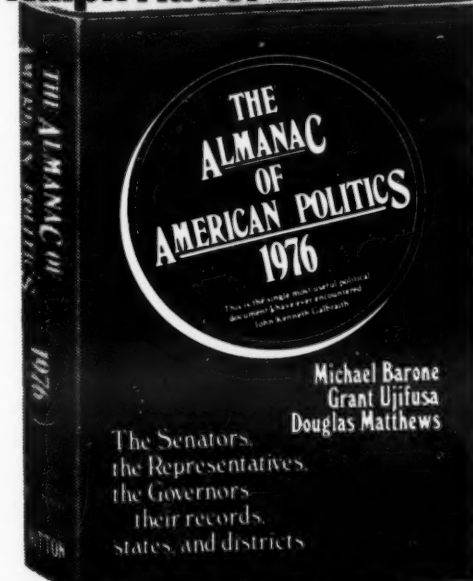
Wm. F. Buckley, Jr.

"The single most valuable political  
document I have encountered."

John Kenneth Galbraith

"A uniquely detailed map of a highly  
unknown terrain called Congress."

Ralph Nader



Just published—the updated 3rd biennial edition of the 1,100 page reference "spiced with intimate detail" about every congressman and senator, their voting records and districts. \$15.95 (\$7.95 paperback). A Sunrise Book

dutton



# Yes, Virginia, There

... and a pile up of  
ment stores; a warn  
old age home in Ha

What with tree-trimming, caroling and last-minute shopping, many readers may not have much time for the news this month. With this in mind, [MORE] asked Kris Nicholson, Paul Shapiro and Lori Shulman to comb the files of *Newsday*, *The New York Times*, the *New York Daily News*, the *Staten Island Advance* and the *New York Post*. Following are some of the stories that appeared during a two-week period in December last year. Since they all will doubtless appear again this year, we offer them here in digest form so that our busy readers will not have to forego their favorite Christmas stories. For those who do have lots of time on their hands, we highly recommend daily immersion in the *Times*'s "Neediest Cases."

## GRAND GIFT GETS KRIS KRINGLING

Santa's helpers yesterday jumped with glee when the jolly gent held aloft a \$1,000 check that came from American Brands, Inc., Manhattan, for this year's Christmas Toy Chest for needy children. The happy scene was in The News lobby, 220 E. 42d St. . . .

*Daily News* 12/14

\* \* \*

## SO YOU'RE TAKING A YOUNGSTER TO SEE SANTA CLAUS—BUT WHICH IS BEST?

It might seem that all department store Santa Clauses are created equal, but visits to a number of major department stores in the city dispelled that notion.

*The New York Times* 12/20

\* \* \*



Sandy Huffaker

*Huffaker*



# There is a Santa Claus...

of holiday mail in the post office; a last-minute rush in the department about dangerous toys for the kiddies; a Yuletide party in the Hackensack; and a prayer for all nations from Pope Paul in Rome.

## FINDS SANTA'S ROUTE LINED WITH CROOKS

A Newark man who found \$50,000 in Rahway, N.J. played Santa Claus this week and handed out \$50 and \$100 bills to friends and neighbors, who later robbed him twice and burglarized his apartment in an effort to find his sack of loot, Newark police said yesterday.

News 12/14

## TIPPING PROBABLY WILL BE MUCH LEANER NOW, TOO

Christmas lagniappe... will be considerably leaner this year. A small, informal survey among residents of all types of apartments, in different areas of the city, indicates that traditional holiday tipping will be down anywhere from 20 to 50 per cent. . .

Times 12/21

**DREAMING OF ONE LAST CHRISTMAS**  
BELLEVILLE, ILL. (AP)—A 14-year-old girl from a welfare family is battling cancer for a final Christmas at home.

Staten Island Advance 12/13

## FIRST FAMILY SKI BUFFS HAVE SIMILAR REQUESTS FOR SANTA

The Christmas wishes of President Ford's family can be summed up in one word—ski.

Advance 12/22

## WARNING ON TREE LIGHTS

Tree trimmers were warned yesterday of potential hazards of 300,000 sets of Taiwan-made miniature lights sold nationally last season and this season.

Newsday 12/20

## IN BETHLEHEM, CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

About 15,000 pilgrims are expected to visit this Arab town in the Judean hills this Christmas.

Newsday 12/22

## A HANDYMAN'S GUIDE TO DECKING THE HALLS

Any reasonably intelligent adult ought to be able to buy, erect, and trim a Christmas tree without incurring bodily harm, marital discord, or psychic trauma. . .

Newsday 12/22

## SANTA, YOU'RE A ROLY POLY...

Dr. Frederick J. Stare, chairman of Harvard University's department of nutrition says, "The image of a roly poly Santa is a bad example for Americans."

Newsday 12/23

## AND NOW, TRUE LOVE'S COSTS A-SOARING

The cost of pear trees has gone up from \$10.80 last Christmas to \$12.48 and partridges from \$6.06 to \$9.60.

Newsday 12/23

## STILL DESPERATE FOR IDEAS?

THERE'S ALWAYS A \$9,000 POOL TABLE

Here at last is the perfect Christmas gift—if. . .

Times 12/23

## TINTYPES... SANTA CLAUS

by Sidney Skolsky in Hollywood

He always wears a red velvet suit trimmed with white fur and a red tassled cone shaped hat to match. . . He is married to Merry Christmas. They live in a luxurious condominium at the North Pole. . . He sleeps in a large double bed with Merry. He wears red flannel pajamas. . .

New York Post 12/21

## THIEF TAKES CHARITY TOYS

MIAMI (AP)—One hundred dolls and 75 pairs of roller skates, Christmas gifts for poor children, have been stolen from a Salvation Army warehouse here.

Post 12/24

## POINSETTIAS CAN LAST ALL YEAR, FLOWER AGAIN NEXT CHRISTMAS

Of all flowering plants involved in Christmas giving, the poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) is the most popular.

Advance 12/20

## 'BILLY ALWAYS DID LIKE CHRISTMAS. . .'

Billy Hayes won't be home for Christmas. . . he will spend this Christmas where he's spent the past 4 Christmases, in Sagmalcilar Prison in Istanbul, serving a 15 year sentence for possession of hashish.

Newsday 12/24

## KNITTING AFGHANS TO WARM THE HEART

Radiating Christmas cheer, two members of the Nassau Retired Senior Volunteer Program arrived at the A. Holly Patterson County Home. . . with gifts to warm the hearts. . . of residents.

Newsday 12/24

## FAMILY DECORATOR

. . . It's amazing how Christmas ornaments have changed over the years. Silvery balls and popcorn strings still exist, yes, but have you seen those patchwork or burlap-covered Christmas balls?

Post 12/14

## SHOPLIFTERS BEWARE:

SANTA CLAUS IS WATCHING YOU

Don't yank on Santa Claus' beard—if he's in Alexander's. The old boy may be a store detective. . .

News 12/20

## VIEWPOINTS: A SPECIAL TALE FOR SPECIAL CHILDREN

This is a special letter written to my two young grandsons who are half American-Bronx-Jewish and half Texas-Lebonese-Catholic. . . It is basically a secular description of the Chanukah-Christmas combination holidays.

Newsday 12/13

## A BLEAK NAZARETH CHRISTMAS

NAZARETH, Israel (AP)—It's a gray Christmas season in Nazareth, the little town where Christ spent his boyhood. Nazareth is broke. The mayor has resigned. The pilgrim trade is shrinking.

Post 12/16

## NO. 84. AMAZING COURAGE

Mr. and Mrs. E. were overwhelmed when Mrs. E's illness proved to be cancer. . . Medical bills have eaten up their savings. A gift of \$150 would help make this Christmas a happy one for them.

Newsday 12/12

## WHAT DID THE WISE MEN SEE?

CHICAGO (CDN)—Just what was that star that the Three Wise Men saw nearly 2,000 years ago? Spiritual meanings aside, there are some astronomical possibilities, says Jim Seever. Comets, a new star, or a conjunction of planets are only some of them.

Post 12/16

## A CHILD PSYCHIATRIST LOOKS AT SANTA CLAUS

. . . Poor Santa Claus is taking his lumps again. As always, tens of millions of children strive delightedly to believe in him, while his critics put him down as an outworn symbol of adult hypocrisy, false expectations and commercial exploitation. He will survive, because he must.

News 12/19

## HELICOPTER CARRIES SANTA TO WILLOWBROOK

About 1,500 residents of Willowbrook Developmental Center yesterday were treated to a visit from a Santa Claus who whirled down to their baseball field in a police helicopter.

"Ho! Ho! Ho!" chortled police maintenance man Charles Fleschner through his artificial whiskers as he emerged from the chopper.

Advance 12/24

## HINTS FROM HELOISE Recycle Christmas paper

Dear Folks:

Mileage is mileage and if we can get a bit more mileage out of anything, why not? If you have any old Christmas wrappings left from last year (and if you were smart, you will have saved 'em), and you cannot iron the creases out of them, put some water in a finger-type plunger bottle and spray the BACK and then press away. Takes out all of those ol' wrinkles.

Advance 12/20

## OLD FRIENDS OF NEEDIEST CASES TURN UP IN INCREASING NUMBERS

. . . A Princeton undergraduate, David Stone, wrote a note that reflected the underlying motive of the fund, which was established in 1912 by the late Adolph S. Ochs, then publisher of The Times. Mr. Stone jotted a few lines on a filing card that was enclosed with his \$5 donation. It read: "Sorry, I couldn't contribute a lot more; this is all I can afford right now. Best of luck in your fund raising."

Times 12/23

## 'WE'RE JUST EXISTING... BILLS ARE PILING UP'

"We're going to have Christmas for our baby. I don't care if we have food or not," says Johnny Garrett.

Newsday 12/26



# Violence In The Morning

(continued from page 12)

Accordingly, he said, two years ago The Post began training non-union employees—"obviously secretly," he said, "because we wanted to protect our people"—to operate presses and other complex machinery.

Mr. Meagher said the training had been given first at the Newspaper Production Research Center in Oklahoma City, a fully equipped mechanical plant supported for this purpose by several hundred newspapers. The unions here are calling it a "scab school."

Starting last July, as the unions' contract deadline of Sept. 30 approached with only desultory bargaining, further "work experience" training was given The Post's non-union standbys "at various cooperating newspaper plants," he said.

"They are working very well," Mr. Meagher said of the standby workers.

The behavior of the pressmen could now at least be understood if not condoned. They had reacted in despair to a two-year-old plan to replace them when their contract expired with non-union workers. Quite a few of them—perhaps, as I have subsequently learned, as many as a third—had been run out of other pressrooms in strike situations by publishers using the Post's tactics.

Local 6 was not a giant union with a full panoply of lawyers, publicists and strategists. It had no full-time officers. James Dugan, its president, still held down a position in the Post pressroom. Dugan's own hypothesis of the violence—that it was brought on by a fit of temporary insanity—did not do much to help his cause. (The actual perpetrators of the sabotage were, of course, suspects in potential felony prosecutions. They could hardly speak for themselves.)

Motivated by a shrinking profit margin (it had dropped below 10 per cent on revenues), the Post had resolved to take advantage of new technology to change fundamentally the power and status of its craft workers. Meagher said the ability to publish without the craftsmen would give the Post parity with their unions. But the ability to publish, which the Post had manifestly achieved, had destroyed the ability of the craft unions to exert much more than moral suasion on the Post.

In collective bargaining, the essential question is always how much each side can make the other suffer if it should come to that. When it does come to that, there is a strike. In a conventional strike, the employer loses its income because its employees have put it out of business. The employees lose their income, too, because they are off the job. Sooner or later, one side or both make concessions because they want to start making money again.

The Post was not making as much money as it had been. But it could look forward to large savings if it broke—or even housebroke—its craft unions. For two years, it had been preparing to do this. In July, when the pressmen proved unwilling to surrender prerogatives they had won in previous negotiations, the Post short-shrifted the bargaining and intensified "cross-training" of people to replace the pressmen. It would be difficult to imagine a more cold-blooded approach to workers, or one more calculated to drive them into a rage.

**B**ehind the Post's decision lay a revolution in newspaper technology. Up through World War II, newspaper production was a job for skilled craftsmen. They operated and kept in repair complex equipment that could not, as a practical matter, be run by anyone else. A series of inventions have since made it possible for less skilled people to do work once monopolized by the craftsmen. The printers, traditionally the most skilled and irreplaceable of newspaper craftsmen, have virtually been automated out of business ["Phasing Out The Wogs"—June 1974]. Typists operating new machinery can now do much of their work faster and for much lower wages than the printers can do it. A number of newspapers—not content with the savings involved in such a shift—are now installing computer-based electronic systems that convert the peckings of reporters on a machine that resembles an electric typewriter into "cold type," entirely bypassing typesetting by printers.

18 [MORE]

The pressmen have suffered less stupendous losses in value. They operate on machinery the same in its essentials as it was 50 years ago. But the new presses are more complex, on the one hand, and simpler to operate, on the other. Their innards are beyond the ken of the average pressman. Yet their actual operation requires donkey work rather easily learned. And the erosion of the value of craft skills has been cumulative in its effect. It was one thing for a newspaper to think of replacing all its craft workers in, say, 1950. It is another to appreciate, in 1975, that only a few highly skilled people will be required to supervise semi-skilled grunts in the pressroom and in a newspaper's other mechanical departments.

You have to be romantic about capitalism not to expect the Post, or any other newspaper management, to take advantage of the situation that has resulted. And, in point of fact, publishers in what used to be called the "scab belt" have been taking this advantage for a very long time. From Los Angeles to Miami, and at a host of smaller cities in between, dozens of newspapers have over the past quarter-century weighed the high cost of union labor, plus the pain and aggravation involved in dealing with a dozen or so unions, against the transient pains of breaking a strike. The Post was now embarked on an enterprise that looked, from the outside, like the same sort of thing. It had demonstrated that novices with a few weeks training could replace journeymen pressmen who had spent—and were being paid for—four years in apprenticeship.

In by far the best piece on the strike I've seen to date, Philip Nobile reports in *New Times* (Nov. 14) that the Post this year budgeted \$2.5 million in straight-time pay, \$1.3 million in overtime and another \$328,000 in penalty time for its 180 journeymen pressmen. A management freed of any constraints from the union could hope realistically to cut the total—\$4,128,000—in half. It could not do this without wrecking some lives and risking a lot of criticism, so it might be willing to save only a million or a million and a half, letting the pressmen return with a contract that converted them into something resembling a house union.

Like the other craft unions, the pressmen (who now called themselves the International Printing and Graphic Communications Union, AFL-CIO) had responded to over a quarter-century of technological change by stiffening their bargaining positions and demanding what unions are supposed to demand—more. At the Post, they were making about \$14,500 a year as scale, and an average of \$22,000 with overtime. Their contract gave them control of work schedules, and this permitted them to earn premium pay for overtime work rather than sending more pressmen to the Post.

With all the craft unions respecting the pressmen's picket lines, attention concentrated on the Baltimore-Washington Newspaper Guild, the union representing editorial and clerical workers at the Post. If the pressmen were to have a show of standing off the Post, they would have to have the Guild with them. The Guild, with about 800 members among the Post's 2,800 employees, did a multitude of jobs necessary to producing a newspaper—jobs that management would have to fill somehow in the absence of Guild members. And the Guild's editorial wing was necessary to producing a quality editorial product. The Post news staff may be, person for person, the strongest in the country.

It seemed to me that the Guild people were in a tight place. They could surely see that without their support the strike had almost no chance of success and that the Post's unions stood to be irremediably weakened. On the other hand, success of the strike was by no means assured, even if the Guild too hit the bricks. If they honored the picket lines, the Post would have to replace them somehow. Both their own jobs and the editorial quality of their paper—of which most of the Post's journalists were intensely and understandably proud—would be at risk.

There was a huge disagreement within the Guild. But none of the stories I read about the disagreement mentioned these basic concerns. They concentrated instead on the repugnance Guild

members felt at the pressroom sabotage and at violence in the pressroom (where a pressroom foreman who was also a union member had been beaten and threatened) and on the picket line (where pressmen had engaged in many acts of violence against picket-line crossers). "The pressmen violated a cardinal rule of trade unionism: they destroyed the employer's property," Post labor reporter Robert Kaiser wrote, in a characteristic summation of Guild attitudes.

**T**his story illustrated an odd feature of the Post's coverage. It seems to me to have been at least as good as any other daily paper's, certainly a rarity for a struck sheet. It was distinguished, I thought, by efforts to offer balanced coverage. "Many Guild members," Kaiser wrote, "share a bitter enmity for the Post's chief labor negotiator, Lawrence A. Wallace, with other unions in the building. A complaint often heard from working Guild members last week was, 'I don't want to be Larry Wallace's patsy.'" There were many such touches in Kaiser's coverage. But the effect was strange, like reporting the end of World War II evenhandedly, except for failing to mention that atomic bombs had dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Guild local and the international union took the predictable position that the Post Guild members should back the strike. A majority of members at the Post crossed the picket lines and kept on working. I have since talked with a number of Guild members. They stress the sabotage, the violence and featherbedding in the pressroom. They have to be pressed hard before they will acknowledge the swing role they are playing—that, for better or worse, they have emerged as Larry Wallace's patsies. In part, this is a result of saturation public and employee relations activity by the Post. In the first few days of the strike, as reaction in the Guild and elsewhere hardened against the pressmen because of the sabotage, the Post made its position known to anyone who was interested. Press conferences and position papers were readily available. Reporters were taken through the wrecked pressroom. And so, as they showed up for work the next day, were a number of Guild members. Their reaction to the visible damage played a big role in the Post Guild's decision (since reinforced by repetition) to keep working.

By contrast, the scrawny little union local sat as if in stupefaction through the early days of the strike. James A. Dugan, the local's part-time president, seems a competent shop leader but he has had neither the experience nor, I would guess, the inclination to play for public opinion against the corporate hierarchy of the Post. Dugan expresses himself forcefully and intelligently. But he is not long on hype. And he is a very busy man. When, many days after the strike had started, I arranged to see him I was channeled through the international headquarters of the union, which are in Washington. I got the number of Dugan's strike headquarters only after telling an official of the international union that I had too many contacts not to get it elsewhere.

The experience reinforced an impression, reached many years ago, that the small unions which abound in newspaper publishing are a misfortune in many ways and to almost everyone. They had once pitted their strengths—their craftsmanship—against publishers and each other, and had prospered. But time and technology had rendered them archaic. Newspapers were no longer physically produced by congeries of craftsmen but by sophisticated machinery which required some extraordinarily skilled people and numbers of semi-skilled people.

In labor-management terms, newspaper production plants had moved in the direction of the telephone company. They were not yet so completely automated that a newspaper could be produced without human hands. But they were heading in that direction. And they had, in the process, rendered virtually obsolete the skills of the people who worked in them. The only union structure that made any sense in this new world was what is called industrial unionism, in which all employees in a



single place of business are members of a single union. The unions involved had come belatedly to recognize this and were, through mergers, slowly moving in that direction. But they seemed to have started far too late. A single union made up of all *Post* workers would have brought more strength into contract bargaining, boasted better facilities for telling its side of any story, and presumably spoken to management with one voice.

Still, it was not certain that even a unified industrial union could prove a match for the new technology. *Newsday*, where I work, is approaching such an arrangement. Its editorial staff and its truck drivers are now represented by Local 406 of the pressmen's union. Each of the units involved must secure the endorsement of the entire union for their bargaining goals. Each can count on the entire union for support in a strike. Yet when the editorial unit took a strike vote in its first contract negotiations a few weeks ago, management issued a terse, matter-of-fact announcement to all concerned saying that it would continue to publish if there were a strike. In one form or another, what is happening at the *Post* seems a distinct prospect at virtually every unionized paper in the country.

**T**he major impediment to union-busting (or castration) remains competition from other newspapers. In Washington, where the *Post* had been billing 70 per cent of daily newspaper advertising, while the afternoon *Star* struggles along with the other 30, Katharine Graham, the president and publisher of the *Post*, is acutely aware of this. In one of the more bizarre developments in the strike, she has put heavy pressure on Joe L. Allbritton, the *Star's* new proprietor, to join in her battle against the unions. This pressure had an odd by-product. On Oct. 3, James Reston, the current holder of the Arthur Krock chair on the opposite editorial page of *The New York Times*, huffed into the strike scene:

The pressmen of the Washington *Post* have finally succeeded in doing to their own newspaper what former President Nixon and his Attorney General John Mitchell tried and failed to do during the Watergate conflict: They have stopped the presses at the *Post*.

Not by legal action. Not by a legitimate strike, but by fire, smash and run. This was no complicated collective bargaining power-play but a simple, vicious and planned act of sabotage. Even in the revolutionary turmoil of Portugal, where the communists and the Socialists have been fighting over control of the last independent newspaper, *República*, and over the operation of the Roman Catholic Church's radio station, nobody put the torch to the presses or pulled the electrical guts out of the transmitters. They occupied the joint but they didn't try to destroy it.

The pressmen at the Washington *Post*, which has been more liberal politically and more generous economically with its employees than almost any other newspaper in the country, showed no such restraint. Knowing the fantastic cost and fragility of modern presses, they set at least one of them on fire, cut the webs and ripped the wires out of others, and sawed off the adjusting press screws down to their stubs, before they went out and picketed for public support.

Re-reading this now, I find myself wondering if Reston has ever given any thought to the fragility of the modern pressman, or what opinion he may hold on a cold-blooded, long-term scheme to break a union and render its members impotent at the bargaining table.

There was a lot more of this sort of thing. Then Reston, fully lathered, got into his main pitch. He said newspapers all over were offering aid to the *Post*. He went on:

But the main burden has fallen on Joe Allbritton, the new owner of the Washington *Star*, who is now losing a million dollars a month. He has a problem. Should he come out against the sabotage by the *Post's* pressmen, and offer to print the *Post*, making a common front against this anarchy, or concentrate on his own immediate interests?

Reston was fair, in his fashion, to Allbritton. The *Star*, the columnist acknowledged, might not survive a shutdown, and the pressmen would surely strike there, too, if the *Star* started printing the *Post*. He said the *Post* had the resources to survive and cheered it for meeting "the two main obligations of any newspaper: to stay alive financially and to print the news." Eventually he concluded, in what seemed a refutation of his own argument:



Wrecked presses at *The Washington Post*

Wide World

"The tragedy is that the *Post* and the *Star* could not get together, even if they had to go down together, on this issue."

Since Allbritton was intent on doing precisely what Reston had praised the *Post* for doing—staying alive financially and printing the news—and since Reston acknowledged that the *Star*, if it shut down, might never print again, while the *Post* was sure to survive, I found his logic impenetrable.

The next day, the *Star* dutifully printed Reston's ramblings, which came to it on the *Times* wire, alongside a response by Jimmy Breslin, one of the *Star's* temporary writers in residence. Reston had remarked that: "Washington needs two newspapers and can probably not have them unless they work together, while competing against one another, with a common printing company." But such an arrangement, Reston added, was "now more remote than ever. The *Star* needed The *Post* and The *Post* felt that The *Star* played the role of fearful bystander in the crisis. . . ."

I had found these words odd. Breslin found them sinister. It turned out that he knew more than I did. He disclosed that on Oct. 2, Allbritton (and, it was later disclosed, James Bellows, the *Star's* editor) had lunched with Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, publisher of the *Times*, and Clifton Daniel, the *Times's* Washington bureau chief. Presumably after a fill-in on the luncheon conversation, Breslin interpreted Reston's pawky ruminations as meaning: "Come along with us, you Allbritton, or we'll bury you."

In *The New Republic* of Oct. 25, Eliot Marshall offered a more extensive, less frenetic and ultimately damning account of the lunch and the column. Sulzberger, reached by Marshall, reportedly denied trying to persuade Allbritton to do anything. But he did outline his thinking. "The whole name of the game [would be] to black out the whole city and double the leverage on the union," Marshall quoted Sulzberger as explaining.

The pressure on the *Star* has provoked virtually the only public criticism of Graham and the *Post*. I find this fascinating for what it tells about public values and the way public opinion is made. The attempted persuasion of the *Star*—ugly as it may have been—was at worst a threat and has remained one. Yet the *Star* has its own printing press, its own publicists and its own claim on the sympathies of opinion-makers. The pressmen have not merely been threatened. They are being ruined. But their capacity to express their situation is limited and they enjoy, it would seem, no claim on the sympathies of anyone who does not work with his hands.

Whether it is Guild members, reacting to the skillfully developed exposition of pressroom violence; or working journalists, writing their natives-are-restless stories; or the ordinary news-

paper reader, digesting accounts of events that, however well-intentioned their authors, have remained profoundly misleading, the same class prejudice manifests itself time after time. Nobile's piece in *News Times* is an honorable and attractive exception to this generalization. It is not pro-pressman by a long shot. But it is balanced and extensive, and it is informed by a concern for the human condition generally. He quotes Bill McKaye, an editor of the *Post's* Sunday supplement as saying:

"I believe the paper should shut down and settle with the unions. What I find ominous is that a number of Guild people don't think they have common cause with craftsmen. They feel professionally superior to guys with dirt under their fingernails. The Guild is very likely on the verge of collapse because it can't act like a union."

**J**ust so. Like all savages, the guys with the dirty fingernails become, in a crisis, mere humanoids. An act of atrocity by one of them—of restlessness among the natives—prompts outrage unmarred by curiosity, let alone compassion. *Post* reporters and editors who have themselves dealt extensively with cases of racial and class injustice—with blacks wrongly accused of rape, or of rebel union leaders gunned down by their entrenched opponents, or of old people given unproved, damaging medicine—these same editors and reporters simply edit their fellow workers in blue collars and newsprint hats out of the human race when push comes to shove.

They complain of the sabotage and, less vehemently, of the wage scales and "featherbedding" of the pressmen. Some Guild members who appear to exist for their two- and three-hour *Post* financed lunches, and who are themselves ridiculously overpaid in comparison with their betters at the *Post* and elsewhere, rage and bellow because some of their co-workers make \$30,000 a year, including heroic amounts of overtime, for tending presses, and because these co-workers sometimes slip out for a beer on company time.

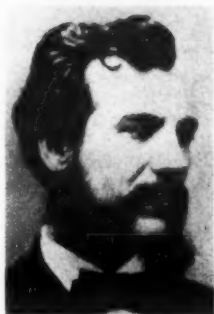
The central point here is not the simplistic (though valid) one that the *Post's* journalists are draft-dodging in the industrial war. It is that people of their class, including the people who read this journal, are usually stone-blind to the situations of the people with dirt beneath their fingernails. Class war is one possible consequence of this blindness. Another is the destruction of any and all mechanisms by which people who work for a living have anything to say, as a group, about their conditions of employment or anything else. We live in a world where people's social and economic class are mutable. The people who write this year's natives-are-restless stories may be restless themselves—and comparably uncomprehended in their restlessness—half a decade hence.



One of a series of reports on the first hundred years of the telephone.

## The Bell System didn't just happen.

Thanks to Alexander Graham Bell, all nations have telephones. Thanks to Theodore Newton Vail, the United States has the world's best telephone system.



Alexander Graham Bell

Theodore Newton Vail was the first General Manager of the Bell Telephone Company. He was hired in 1878, when the telephone was two years old, and 10,755 sets were in service, most of them in the Northeast. His vision of what the new invention could become equaled Bell's own.

Both men saw that the success of the infant telephone industry depended on offering customers an integrated nationwide telephone system. The goal, as Vail later phrased it, was "one policy, one system, universal service." "The strength of the Bell System," he wrote, "lies in this universality."

Vail's economic insight was remarkable for his day. He was managing a new kind of enterprise, one of the first of what we now call technological industries. He saw that technology gave birth to the telephone, and that technology also imposed new requirements on the managers of the business. Manufacturing telephones required a large commitment of capital, for specialized factories. Improving the telephone required coordination of research efforts, plus more capital for laboratories. Marketing the telephone successfully required reasonable assurance that supply and demand would keep pace with each other. Vail realized that the only way those requirements could be met was for management to plan every step of the enterprise, from sources of supply to customer orders.

Contrast the case of the manager of a simpler business—a small bakery, for instance. The manager has great freedom. If



Theodore Newton Vail

cake doesn't sell, he can bake bread. If white bread doesn't sell, he can bake rye. There is no need to commit large sums of capital, since the same ovens serve for all three products. No research effort is required, since the recipes are well known. If the price of flour goes up, the manager can raise the price of bread immediately. If demand varies, he can bake more bread or less. The technological industry, by its very nature, lacks such flexibility.

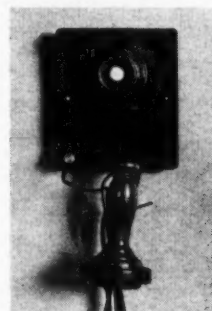
The first telephones were made in a Boston machine shop. Demand soon outstripped capacity, and firms in several cities were licensed to make sets under the Bell patents. Vail wanted closer integration of manufacture, to assure the company's service objectives. In 1881, the Bell company acquired controlling interest in the Western Electric Company of Chicago, and in 1882, made that company the manufacturer of Bell equipment.

This arrangement was desirable for a number of technical reasons: quality, reliability, standardization. Vail also had a strong managerial reason. The Bell company's business was providing telephone service. Success depended on having a dependable supply of quality equipment needed for the service, at a reasonable cost. By integrating manufacturing within the Bell company, Vail took a long step toward that goal.

At this point the groundwork was laid for a nationwide network. In 1884 the first Boston to New York line proved that commercial long distance telephony was possible—and profitable. Vail and his

cake doesn't sell, he can bake bread. If white bread doesn't sell, he can bake rye. There is no need to commit large sums of capital, since the same ovens serve for all three products. No research effort is

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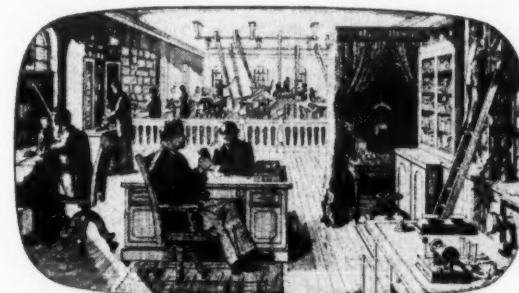


Vail's ability to plan turned Bell's invention into the best telephone system in the world.

associates organized an additional company, whose corporate charter put Vail's dream in black and white. Its business was to be "constructing, buying, owning, leasing or otherwise obtaining, lines...and equipment, using, operating or otherwise maintaining, the same....The lines of this association...will connect one or more points in each and every city, town or place, in...the United States, Canada and Mexico, and also by cable and other appropriate means with the rest of the known world...."

Despite all the progress made, Vail saw a basic threat to the industry. Although it was growing, the quality of the service it provided was deteriorating. Some of the earliest equipment needed to be replaced. Rapid expansion was causing growing pains. Vail knew these service problems must be dealt with. But the Boston financiers who determined company policy felt their primary duty was to maximize profit for investors. The financiers represented the thinking of the day; once again Vail's ideas were decades ahead of his time. In 1887, Vail felt compelled to resign. For the next twenty years, he followed telephone developments as an interested outsider.

In 1893 and 1894, the Bell telephone patents expired. New telephone companies sprang up almost overnight, many of them

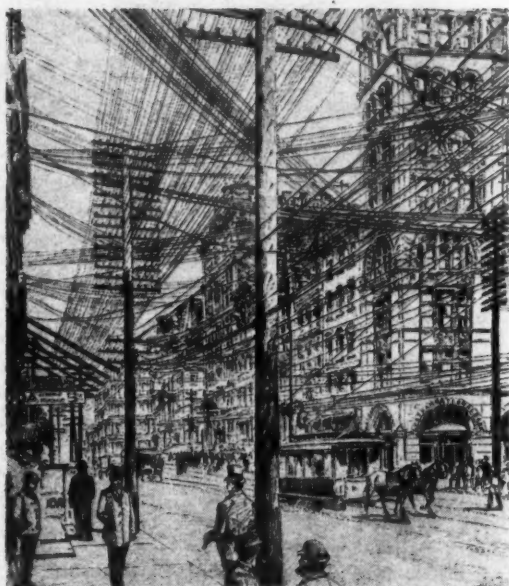


The predecessor of Bell Telephone Laboratories: the Bell company's Mechanical Department in the 1880's.

in cities already served by Bell companies. Since the wires of the new companies did not connect with Bell wires, their subscribers could not talk with Bell subscribers. In order to be in touch with all the telephones



# It was planned, right from the start.



Broadway and John Street, New York City, 1890.  
Vail succeeded in getting the city's wires put underground.

in town, stores and offices had to have two telephones. That meant two directories, two sets of wires—and two bills. Nevertheless, demand for all telephones was soaring. The new companies grew, the Bell affiliated companies grew, the confusion grew.

Growth brought financial problems. Earnings, handsome as they were, were insufficient to finance such rapid expansion. (The telephone industry is a capital intensive industry.) Bell management borrowed more and more money from big banks. By 1907, lenders were getting hard to find. Then came the Panic of 1907. To protect their interests, the bankers demanded that telephone management invite Vail back to run things. Vail accepted the invitation. That year there were 3,132,000 Bell telephones in service.

Vail's return to command restored the financial community's confidence in the Bell company, so towering was the reputation he had built. Improving the quality of the service was his first concern. He made sure that concern was understood by Bell people throughout the land. Thanks to their efforts, and investment in needed equipment, service improved.

Further improvement depended on improving telephone technology. Research was going on in various parts of the com-

pany, in various cities. To encourage better planning and coordination, Vail unified the research effort. And he directed the researchers to examine at once a new device, the audion tube invented by Dr. Lee De Forest. Working with De Forest, telephone researchers developed the vacuum tube electronic amplifier, which greatly extended the range of long distance service, and led in time to commercial radio and television.

Duplicate telephone companies in various towns were incompatible with good service. Waterworks and electric companies were recognized as "public utilities," granted exclusive franchises for geographical areas. Vail believed that same reasoning applied to the telephone industry. He set out to eliminate the duplication by buying out the rival companies where that was possible, or selling out to them in some towns if that was the only way. In 1913, as a step toward universal service, he agreed to allow the independent (non-Bell) companies to use the Bell long distance lines.

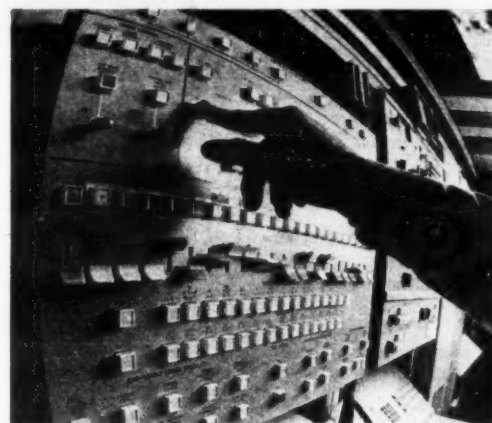
Now Vail could speak confidently of a *telephone system* rather than a large number of isolated, unconnected telephone companies. He was the first to use the phrase "Bell System." He could look to the day when telephone service would be well within the means of the average American. And that gave him the final element in his planning: he could make long-range estimates of the needs of his customers. The chain was complete: research and development, an efficient source of supply in the Western Electric Company and total responsibility for installation, maintenance and repair in the local companies.

Because Vail could plan in this way, the company could invest the necessary millions in equipment for current needs, and in research for predictable future growth.

The Bell System continues today in the pattern Vail set. Not as a matter of

tradition, but because the concept works. We are planning today American telephone service for the 21st Century. Western Electric and the associated Bell Companies are installing new electronic switching systems nationwide, which make possible many additional telephone services. Scientists and engineers at Bell Laboratories, birthplace of the first electrical digital computer and the transistor, are working now on new technology to transmit telephone calls on a beam of light, to handle calling volumes expected by the year 2000.

Research, manufacturing, operations—one Bell System, a planned approach that works. Efficiency and productivity are well ahead of the average for all other industries, the system is the best in the



Electronic switching systems, a thousand times faster than the equipment they replace, are now being installed across the nation.

world. There are two tests you can make yourself to see if the Bell System really works: Compare telephone prices to the price of almost anything else over the past twenty-five years. Long distance service is one of the few things that have hardly gone up at all. Other telephone services have gone up far less than the price of almost anything else you buy. The economics of a planned telephone system have surely been to the customer's benefit. What about the service? Well, just pick up your telephone. Call any number in the United States.

The best telephone system in the world didn't just happen. It was planned that way.

One Bell System. It works.



**Bell System**



# 'Hitler As An Amateur Painter'

BY ANDREW WARD

You have this story you haven't been able to sell. You think it's the best thing you ever wrote. So does your mother. It has been bounced from the editorial desks of every major magazine in the country. You could give up; you could let it get you down. But that's not your way. You are going to send that story to every magazine, digest, tri-quarterly, observer, showcase, tattler and bulletin in the country until somebody, by God, publishes the damn thing.

Your handbook in this campaign will be *Writer's Market*, in whose thousand pages are listed just about every buyer of freelance material in the nation: some 5,000 markets for everything from librettos to greeting card gags. The sky's the limit: *Pennsylvania Black Observer*, *Harmonica Happenings*, *Exceptional Parent*, *Make It with Leather*, *Bulletin of Bibliography and Magazine Notes*, *Hoosier Challenger Magazine*, *Sinclair Lewis Newsletter*, *Evangelizing Today's Child*, *Dynamic Maturity*, *Bausch & Lomb Focus*, *Modern Bulk Transporter*, *Non-Wovens and Disposable Soft Goods*, *Training Film Profiles*, *Polled Hereford World* and *G-String Beat*, to name a few.

Forget writer's block. Forget your drinking problem. Forget those printed rejection slips from the slicks. Leaf through *Writer's Market*. Don't you get the message? There is simply no excuse for flopping as a freelance writer, not if the law of averages is anything to bank on. Can't place your piece in *Brownie Reader*? Move on to *South Dakota Review*, where they're "open to paramyth and jungian treatments." Can't deliver on jungian treatments? No problem, just "keep your characters neurotic within the framework of today's modern society" and address it to *Fling*. Did *Fling* turn you down? Work in some "industrial pump-related human interest" and send it off to *Goulds Pumps Industrial News*.

But let's not go off half-cocked. Keep in mind these publications have their standards (with the possible exception of *Pacifica Magazine* which "likes to take even the worst copy—as long as there is a germ of a story or idea and as long as the author's ego can stand editing. . ."). It doesn't matter how obscure your story's subject may be, it's been dealt with before, and may even have been done to death. So be a little careful. *Summertime* wants no material on "violence, war, or dating." *Louisiana Woods and Water*, *Field and Stream*, *Louisiana Conservationist*, *Snow Goer*, and *American Rifleman* have had it up to here with "Me-and-Joe" yarns. *Photography 2001* has seen enough on "How I Sold Ten Postcards," and *Witchcraft Digest* is fed up with "Christian propaganda such as 'I Escaped from Witchcraft.' Ugh!"

*Black Business Digest* doesn't want articles "which go overboard in condemning white racism." *Autoweek and Competition Press's* readership's "humor . . . ends when newspapers refer to motor sports fans as 'blood-crazed.'" *Gourmet* is not in the market for nutrition or bizarre foods, and *Railroad Model Craftsman* is sick and tired of "cartoons of little men tying little girls to model railroad tracks." *Journal 31* boasts no taboos, but tends to "stay away from classical literature." *Waves* won't touch pornography or carelessness, *Creative Review* won't put up with "typographical experiments and personal frustrations," and *Views and Reviews* doesn't want things they would rather forget.

Your inspirational market is especially riddled with taboos. *American Orthodoxy*, for instance, wants no "fiction, poetry, or wild ideas." *Annals of Good Saint Anne de Baupre* wants stories that aren't "too goody-goody." *Gospel Carrier* doesn't want any "tobacco, drinking, or dancing," and you can add movies to that list if you're shooting for *Pentecostal Youth*. *Weekly Bible Reader* wants no "fanciful material, superstitions or luck, things that talk, fairies, Easter rabbits,

Andrew Ward is a freelance writer who lives in New Haven.

22 [MORE]

Marty Norman



**In which the author ventures through the pages of *Writer's Market* and learns that "paramyth and jungian treatments" are okay but "little men tying little girls to model railroad tracks" is out.**

. . . Santa Claus, . . . Bible stories or Buzzy Bee items."

But, taboos and all, look at the kinds of articles all these magazines are publishing: "Hitler as an Amateur Painter," "10 Rules for Rhubarb," "What's Happening to the Frogs and Turtles of Eastern Canada?," "Bar-Hopping in Portland," "Girls Have Sex with Plastic Dummy," "Burlap Never Looked Better," "With Kung Fu You Get Heroes," "Arc Welding in Spanish Shipyards," "Apple Butter Time in Burton."

And consider how easy it can be to break in. Almost every editor listed in *Writer's Market* has words of wisdom for the would-be writer, from the general (*The Chicago Sun Times Showcase* urges its writers to just "write well and for God's sake spell well and be accurate") to the very specific indeed (*Kitchen Business* wants you to "just go ahead and do it. Select the best looking kitchen firm in your area, go in and tell the boss you're a writer and want to do a story for *Kitchen Business*, ask him to let you sit down and read an issue or two, interview him on a single how-to-do-it topic, shoot some pictures to illustrate the points in the interview, and take a chance.") *Old West* suggests you "conduct small interviews with alert old people." *The Lunatic Fringe* simply wants you to write "as if you were standing before the gates of hell or paradise." *Periodical* hopes you'll "pick a local

fort." *Mele* demands "Talent! Talent! Talent!" *Christ-Style* is always in the market for "opticals, liturgies, lightshows, etc." And *U.S. Fur Rancher* advocates locating a mink farm with a woman sole owner.

Most demanding of all the editors listed is Duane Locke at *UT* (University of Tampa) *Review*, who advises you to first "alter your consciousness by dismissing conceptual thought, and disdaining all language used for practical necessity. Once you have achieved a rebirth to another mode of being than one of the ordinary and everyday human condition, send us your poems. Start your transformation," Duane continues, "by reading *The Immanentist Anthology* (Smith) and *Mantras* (Floating Hair Press)."

Duane isn't the only editor talking tough in *Writer's Market*. Take Dave Hostetler over at *Purpose*, who complains he is "getting too much self-centered material" and wants "articles which show Christianity slugging it out where people hurt." And if you're thinking of sending something to Ron Lyons over at *Leatherneck*, you might think it over. "If a young freelancer thinks he can write professionally about the Marine Corps, without having served in it," challenges Ron, "he is more than welcome to step up to our firing line. If he can't hit the target," however, "his manuscript will be given the 'Maggie's Drawers' and returned." Frank Hooper at *Fall Rising* wants articles that are "like a woman's skirt—long enough to cover the subject and short enough to be interesting." And a peevish Jay W. Hedden at *Workbench* complains that "very few would-be writers will accept criticism of an editor who has been in the business for twenty years."

The editor who knows best what he wants is P.E.I. Bonewits of *Gnostica*, a magazine "for men and women interested in astrology, psychic phenomena, occult, witchcraft, prophecy; but not superstitious." He lists, as an example of the kind of outstanding article he is looking for, "Ooops!", a "humorous and accurate treatment of occult dangers" by P.E.I. Bonewits.

If you really have something you want to get off your chest there are a host of magazines eager



to give you a chance: *Confidential Confessions*, *Exciting Confessions*, *Uncensored Confessions*, *Real Confessions*, *Modern Love Confessions*, and *My Love Secret Confession*, plus *Secrets*, *Real Story*, *Daring Romances*, *Revealing Romances*, *Secret Romances*, *Real Romances*, and *True Romance* (where, write the editors, "we love our slush pile"). But whatever shame you have in mind better not involve any of the following if you want to work this gold mine: "drunken parents, auto accidents, adulterous situations, lecherous stepfathers, husbands unmasked as homosexuals, to name a few." *Bronze Thrills*, for one, doesn't want to read another word about pregnancy. The Lopez Romance Group publishes "no overt sex," but they "do get graphic when it gets to the preliminaries." *Romance Philology* yearns for "dialectology, and textual criticism applied to older romance materials."

Fresh material is always in demand in the women's market. *Sisters* could use articles on "automobile repair; what it's like to be a lesbian." *Cosmopolitan* wants "pieces that tell a hip, attractive, 18 to 34-year-old, intelligent, good-citizen girl how to have a more rewarding life," but lay off anything having to do with "space, war on poverty, civil rights, etc." And *American Baby*, geared for expectant and new mothers, "would prefer not to see articles on breastfeeding and natural childbirth."

Can't beam your stuff at women? Jump the fence (straddled in this case by *Gay Sunshine* and *Amazon Quarterly*) and give the opposite sex a try. Work up something in which "man and woman, thrown together by chance, . . . have one big romantic involvement, then pass along their separate ways," and mail it off to *Action for Men* or *True Action*. *Rampage* refers you to their article "Anti-Sex Machines Are Out to Get You" to give you an idea of what they are about. *Man's World* wants stuff that's "a bit sensationalistic" though they de-

scribe themselves as "a notch above the 'tits and terror' level of our other men's mags." In the same general category, *Infantry* freelancers "will sell pieces on How to Kill a Tank," (though "very few articles on Viet Nam are published unless they contain a valuable lesson"). And *National Guardsman* is on the march for new stuff, but will publish "no poems or short stories—ever!"

In the family area, *Gun Week* is looking for reports on "how non-shooters are becoming shooters" and articles promoting "any type" of shooting as a "wholesome family sport." (Over at *Gun World* the editors think "most arms magazines are pretty deadly" and feel "shooting can be fun.") *Life's Lessons* seeks "sound investment opportunities" while *Bend in the River Magazine* wants "to give our readers happy thoughts." *South Jersey Living*, such as it is, wants material on "legalized gambling, lotteries, legalized numbers." And *The Vineyard* wants to find out "when a church, pastor, bishop, a layman has fallen down on the job," though they "don't knock anyone" and want you to be "positive only."

**N**ow you're not going to get rich quick writing for some of these magazines. Sure, you might as well start off with your sights on *Reader's Digest*, where a short first-person narrative can garner \$3,000. But for the most part you'll be lucky to break a hundred. *Slice of Pizza* would like something on how nutritious pizzas are, but they can only deliver \$15 to \$20 for a short piece, \$35 for a feature. You might even have to be satisfied with a fifth of scotch (no brand name specified) for the best poem per issue of *The Aboveground Review*, and if you get something accepted at *The Rag* you're going to have to settle for the glory of it, though they'll "feed you if you're ever in Austin." (Actually, residents of Austin might look into that.)

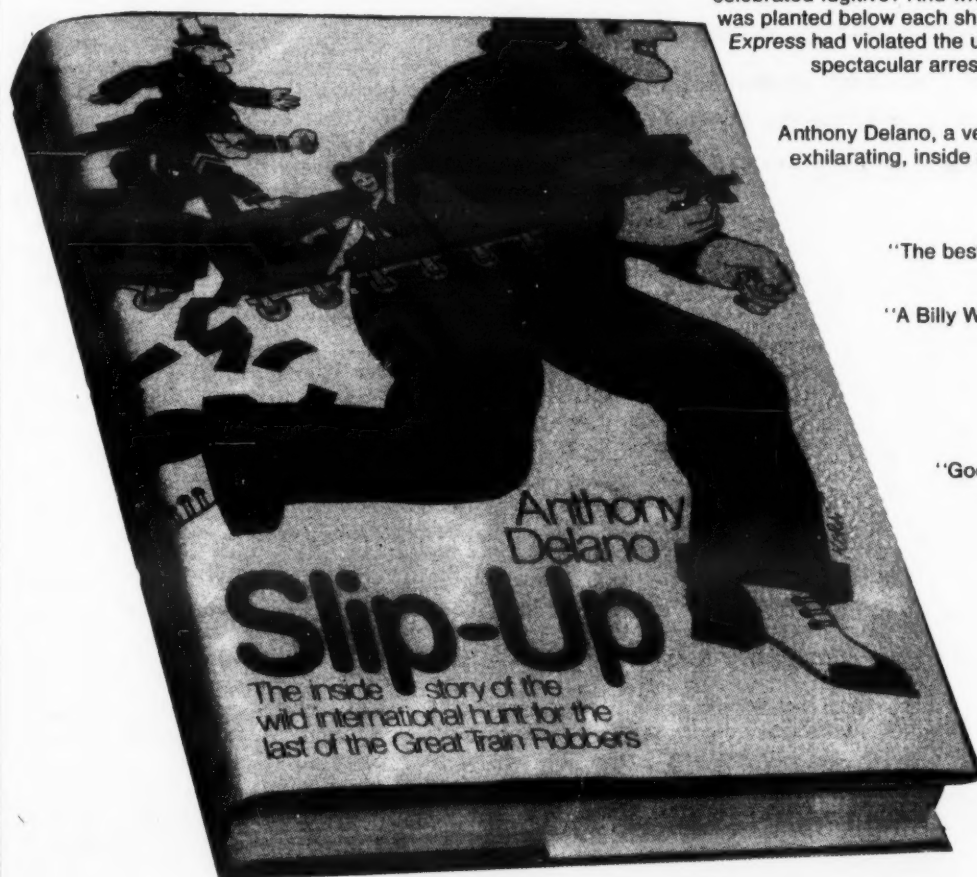
A lot of the "little" magazines—*The Wind-*

*less Orchard*, *Bardic Echoes*, *Under the Mimosa Tree*, *Hyacinths and Biscuits*—seem to take themselves pretty seriously. *Monument in Cantos and Essays* reports it is "not involved in small press cliquishness," and *The Phoenix* declares that it is "not just another nagatory journal." Others, like *Oink!*, and *Part Time Publicly*, and *Erratica* (published "irregularly") don't seem to take themselves seriously enough. *Gone Soft* dislikes things "which are obscure to the reader, no matter how meaningful it is to the writer" but "this does not include gibberish, which can be funny." And it just seems as though Wayne Carter over at *The Carleton Miscellany*, who delivers some 38 lines of his literary views for *Writer's Market*, has a little too much time on his hands. "We refuse to pretend," writes Wayne, "that solemn owls are either serious or important, that pedantry and jargon is legitimate if every once and a while the cuckooing drudge quotes a poet, and that poetry is an opportunity for an illiterate to break into print."

But never mind the taboos. Never mind the advice. Never mind if they only pay in contributor's copies. Be it *Ampers Magazine* seeking "blueprints of ecstasy" or *Deli News* looking for humorous fiction "with some connection to supermarkets or food, preferably refrigerated products," there's a market out here for you. In our prompt and efficient postal system, even as I write, even as you read, there is a storm of manila envelopes, stamped and self-addressed, accompanying thousands of 15- to 5,000-word manuscripts using "no scare words, such as 'socialists,'" and no "seldom heard words," no "liquor in a favorable light," no "fluffy clouds and twinkling skies," no "shark scares," and no "handicapped bowler"—just "spice," and "facts that can be absorbed by scanning," "victory through right principles," and "the mesmeric, the exciting, fantastic, still and beautiful and exquisitely pornographic," and one of them could be yours.

## "The funniest thing about journalists since *Scoop*"

—Philip Knightley, author of *The First Casualty*



With every cop from Scotland Yard aching to clap the cuffs on Ronald Biggs, it was a newspaper, the lively and aggressive *Daily Express* that finally found him, and enraged its competition by the *Scoop* of the Century: the story of Biggs' dramatic arrest in Rio de Janeiro. This was too much for the brutally competitive newspaper world of London's Fleet Street. Rival reporters started asking questions.

How did the *Express* happen to be in just the right place when Biggs was arrested by Detective Chief Superintendent Jack Slipper? How did the Yard know where to find the celebrated fugitive? And who was Colin MacKenzie, the unknown reporter whose byline was planted below each shrieking *Express* headline? Could it possibly be that the *Daily Express* had violated the unwritten code and set a trusting and needy Biggs up for the spectacular arrest? Had the Press been the informant? Had the Yard taken its orders from the *Express*?

Anthony Delano, a veteran Fleet Street reporter, answers all the questions in this exhilarating, inside account of the nuttiest caper since *The Great Train Robbery* itself.

"The best and funniest book about Fleet Street since Michael Frayn."  
—*New Statesman*

"A Billy Wilder-style comedy of muddle, mistrust and misplaced zeal."  
—*New York Times*

"There can be nothing like a Fleet Street pack in full cry on foreign assignment."  
—*More*

"Good, racy story of a newsbeat stretching from London to Rio."  
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# THE BIG APPLE

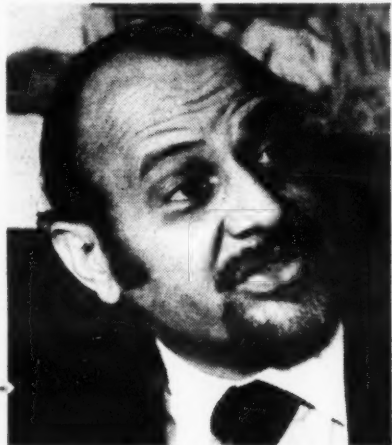
## Continuing Sagas

As part-owner of the *New York Amsterdam News*, Manhattan Borough President Percy Sutton used the black weekly's news and editorial pages to further his political career ["Abandoning the Brother on the Street"—August 1975]. On Nov. 3, Sutton abruptly offered his stock in the paper—approximately 32 per cent of the shares—for sale to the five remaining owners. The reason, he told *The New York Times*, was that the *News* had become "a political liability."

In past months, Sutton has been hounded increasingly by reporters questioning the conflict-of-interest for a politician interfering with an editorial product. Sutton has continued to deny playing any editorial role.

During the same recent period, the *News* has become, in the words of one regular reader, "less wishy-washy and speaking more for the black community." One editorial, for example, criticized Mayor Beame's refusal to greet President Sadat of Egypt as "absolutely wrong in placing his Jewish sympathies above, and beyond his [mayoral] responsibilities..." Sutton is a mayoral aspirant with no desire to offend the Jewish community here; still, his stock offering was apparently not based on unease with the *News*'s editorial content. "The reporters were breaking his balls," says one person close to Sutton.

There are reportedly discussions underway about apportioning;

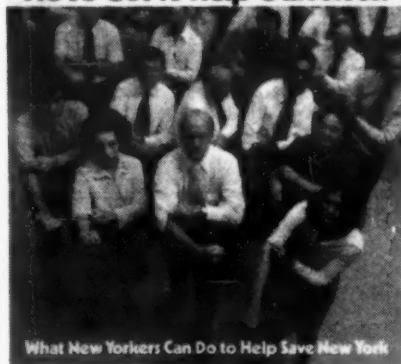


Percy Sutton

Sutton's stock among the remaining board of directors. The largest *News* stockholder—with about 49 per cent—is former editor Clarence Jones, who left the paper in 1974 after losing an internal power struggle. Jones subsequently borrowed money from David Rosen, secretary and chairman of the board of Metropolitan News Company, which distributes newspapers in Manhattan and the Bronx. Jones put up all or part of his stock as collateral. He later defaulted on the loan, but Rosen says he was unable to take title to the shares because, under a restricted stock agreement, Jones could not legally offer the stock as collateral. So Jones's name remains on the stock, but his status seems precarious, since he reportedly owes the *News* money also.

Photo: Robert F. Scheraga  
Pasta: Carl M. Scheraga  
Gael Greene on Diet Recipes of a French Master Chef

## We've Got To Help Ourselves



Osborn Elliott, in the center foreground of *New York's* cover, urges New Yorkers to get out and do something. In the spirit of austerity, Daily News food expert Don Singleton (right) foregoes the pleasures of truffles and settles for canned corn.

For the last few years, Rosen has been acting as an unofficial advisor to the *News* in its efforts to secure an outside distributor. Presently the *News* and the *Village Voice* are the only major papers in New York that distribute their product themselves. Only the *News*, however, has to do it through the Newspaper and Mail Deliverers Union, which has about 40 drivers working there. By using an independent distributor, the *News* could probably trim the number of union personnel to around ten—a considerable savings and, of course, a considerable loss of jobs by the union. Union approval, which is needed for the switch, has always been denied. But in the likelihood that it will eventually be granted, the *News* franchise would undoubtedly go to Metropolitan News. Rosen—out both his money and the stock—says "the *News* could be an economically sound paper, and I would enjoy owning it. But I would enjoy distributing it even more."

—CLAUDIA COHEN

## Rome Before The Fall

As another default deadline neared, the message from *New York* magazine was downright alarming. An unusual editorial in the Nov. 17 issue advised that

If the current crisis in New York means one less dinner party or movie-screening or night out a week, if it means a few hours of plodding but essential work in a neighborhood park or recreation center or hospital, that is a small price to pay to sustain the life of this city.

The accompanying article by Ken Auletta goes further, declaring that the city

is now on the brink of a near-wartime situation... there will be austerity of a kind that is without precedent... the only way... is through volunteerism.

One group trying to mobilize such a volunteer force is the Citizens Committee for New York City, whose members are pictured on *New York's* cover, sleeves rolled up, fists clenched. "We've got to Help Ourselves," they proclaim.



After a few hours spent helping the American Red Cross, however, *New York* readers can still help themselves to a little foie gras. The bulk of the issue is "a special section on connoisseurship." Nine experts discuss the proper selection of butter, pasta, coffee, smoked salmon, caviar, ice cream and chocolate. A seven-page spread presents various New Yorkers showing off their 1,000- to 5,000-bottle wine cellars, and suggests that "even your hall closet" might suffice for your rare vintages. Another article is called, "Gael Greene Entertains With Diet Recipes Of France's Most Creative Chef" (e.g., hearts of artichoke melanie).

Asked whether the pleas for austerity seemed odd in juxtaposition to the celebration of hedonism, Osborn Elliott, *Newsweek* editor-in-chief and chairman of the citizens committee, replied that this was "a dopey question. If you knew how magazines worked, you would realize that they had the special issue laid out before the news broke." Elliott, who appeared that week on WABC-TV's A.M. *New York* with *New York* editor Clay Felker, added, "We should commend them for their effort." *New York's* editorial director Jack Nessel points out that in the Nov. 17 editorial, "*New York* makes it clear that it celebrates the pleasures of New York as well as the problems. In London during the blitz," Nessel noted, "the citizens went about in their best fashion possible while the bombs were dropping."

Alongside news of default maneuverings and Mideast bombings, the front page of the Nov. 14 *New York Times* featured an article by resident gourmet Craig Claiborne headlined, JUST A QUIET DINNER FOR TWO IN PARIS: 31 DISHES, NINE WINES, A \$4,000 CHECK. During a WNET fund-raising auction last June, Claiborne had submitted a high bid of \$300 that won him a dinner at any restaurant in the world, guest of American Express. He selected Chez Denis in Paris—a convenient choice because he was heading for Europe on

a three-week tour for the *Times*. Thus, the paper picked up all additional expenses.

Once in Paris, Claiborne asked the proprietor of Chez Denis

how much he would charge for the most lavish dinner for two that he and his chef could prepare. He spoke in terms of \$2,000 to \$3,000. We told him... money was no obstacle...

The proprietor, Claiborne reports, suggested that the meal be served for four persons—all for the same price—because the food had to be prepared in a certain quantity and would be enough to serve as many as 10 persons, while the wines were enough for four. We declined, because the rules set by American Express called for dinner for two.

That decided, Claiborne and chef Pierre Franey sat down for the 31-course feast, which included: Beluga caviar, three soups, "tender rare-roasted fillet of Limousin beef with a rich truffle sauce," rognonade de veau wrapped in puff pastry; foie gras and, of course, filets et sots l'y laissant de Bresse. The oldest of the wines—which altogether cost nearly \$2,000—was a 140-year old madeira.

The perfect meal for the price? Our discriminating gourmet found the "presentation of the dishes, particularly... the sweetbread parfait and quail mousse... mundane." Not only that, but the Breton oysters in beurre blanc sauce were "lukewarm" and "the lobster in the gratin was chewy."

Claiborne's article was first submitted to family/style editor Joan Whitman, who found it "unusual" enough for front-page recommendation. She submitted it to the metropolitan desk, which forwarded it to the managing editor's office for final approval.

When the story appeared, there was an outburst at the *Times*. Some staffers chuckled over Claiborne's audacious "rip-off" of American Express. But more were furious about the story's placement on page one. "It would have been less noticeable inside the paper," said reporter Judy Klemesrud. "Bad taste," said one critic. "Pretentious," said another. Reporter John Hess, a former *Times* food critic himself, went further, calling the story not only "gross, but gastronomically illiterate." At their "ancient bouffes," Louis XIV and Henry VIII may have served similar spreads, says Hess, but those dishes were "never meant to have been eaten in a row like that." What's more, says Hess, Claiborne "doesn't understand such sauces as beurre blanc, which, if it were very hot, wouldn't be a beurre blanc."

Reaction to the piece was not only internal. Following an article about the dinner in the *International Herald Tribune* in Paris, Agence France Presse asked the Vatican its reaction to the meal. The Vatican replied that it was "wasteful." Indeed, the story was so controversial that the *Times* considered running a reaction piece, to be written by family/style reporter Lawrence Van Gelder. As of three days later, however, no story had appeared. "There was very little re-



# THE BIG APPLE

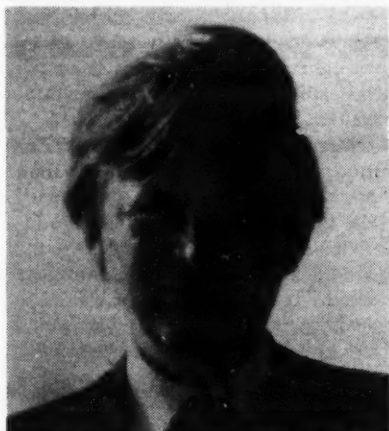
action," explained Joan Whitman.

So far, the last word has come from the *Sunday News*, which countered with a Nov. 16 story headlined JUST A QUIET DINNER FOR 1 ON BOWERY: \$3.55. "This being the week for fancy meals," wrote "News gourmet" Don Singleton, he challenged the chef of the J & M Delicatessen on Delancey Street to prepare "his most sumptuous meal . . . And don't worry about the price." Singleton feasted on "anonymous soup," stuffed pepper, potatoes and canned corn, two slices of white bread and pineapple soda. A large front-page picture featured him at the banquet table, behind a bottle of ketchup. When presented with his expense account, Singleton reports, the *News* "choked up briefly . . . but decided the publicity value would make the investment worthwhile."

—LORI L. SHULMAN

## The Old Journalism

Author Tom Wolfe is used to being accused of passing off baseless conjecture as New Journalism, but he had to laugh at a New York dinner party



Tom Wolfe

Annie Leibovitz/UPI

last August when another guest asked, "What's this about your writing an attack on *Finnegan's Wake*?" Wolfe thought the man was pulling his leg; he had never thought of writing anything of the kind. The guest, however, said he'd heard the story from "someone else."

Someone else also passed it on to Judith Daniels, managing editor of

*The Village Voice*. She gave it to "Scoop," the *Voice*'s unsigned gossip column dedicated to providing fixes for addicts of inside dope. On September 8, "Scoop" told all:

"English majors, attention: If you ever thought the Agenbit of Inwit and sundry ineluctable modalities were a crock, you'll be glad to know Tom Wolfe has put James Joyce's *Ulysses* on his list of consumer frauds. Editors at *Esquire* are looking forward to the delivery of the manuscript and boning up on the classic to better appreciate Wolfe's demolition job."

Wolfe first checked with his *Esquire* editor, Gordon Lish, who said "Scoop" was the first to tell him about these editorial plans. Then Wolfe ignored the item, though he allowed that *Ulysses* was a more interesting thought than *Finnegan's Wake*.

John Leonard, *The New York Times*'s cultural critic, took the *Voice* more seriously: on Sept. 29, he predicated a piece about literary critics on the news that Wolfe was about to "blow the whistle on *Ulysses*," and wrapped up with the last-minute intelligence that Wolfe "has at least temporarily abandoned the project. A usually reliable source at *Esquire* suggests that, 'Maybe he read the book and changed his mind.'"

Wolfe decided it was high time to speak up, and he wrote disclaimers to the *Voice* (Oct. 20) and the *Times* (Nov. 1). The *Times* replied that "Mr. Leonard stands by his story," and the next day the *New York Daily News* stood by Leonard in "The Gossip Column," a weekly question-and-answer section written by one Robin Adams Sloan and syndicated by King Features. In reply to C.T. in Brooklyn, who wondered what target would suffer Wolfe's "next attack," Sloan said, "He was going to debunk James Joyce's *Ulysses*, but we hear Tom has backed off from this project."

Two weeks of the tangled trail of this rumor that refused to die led us in circles to California and back, finally, to Daniels' and Leonard's anonymous sources at *Esquire*. There, feeling against the *Times* will run high at least until January, when editor-in-chief Arnold Gingrich plans to dissect

## Manhunt

*Harper's Bazaar*, that mainstay of the fashion conscious, devoted its November issue to the working woman. Features included methods of money management, how to assemble a one-week wardrobe for \$95 and whether our heroine should sleep with the boss. Indeed, the very presence of men figure prominently in the *Bazaar* woman's career. In an article called "Jobs to Meet Men," the magazine advises that, "First of all, you must decide what kind of man you're looking for." If it's a rich man, *Bazaar* suggests becoming a stockbroker, "an administrator at a dockyard catering to international yachts" or "a barmaid at a country club or a fashionable pub" (caveat: patrons "won't all be Edgar Bronfmans"). Want to snag a doctor? "Become a dental technician and get a dentist to fill the cavity in your life." However, if it's a poor man you must have, counsels *Bazaar*, you might run a course on how to get poetry published, be a non-union camerawoman, or, as a last resort, "work as a newspaper reporter, where the men are rarely well paid but are livelier than undertakers and more interesting." Livelier, anyway.

—C.C.



Donna



Barbara

## Busted Picture

A full press run—approximately 50,000 copies—of Morristown, New Jersey's *Sunday Daily Record* magazine were stacked in piles in the newsroom awaiting shipment—not to the newsstands but the recycling plant. Contained in the Nov. 2 magazine was a review of the Ten-Two Steak and Seafood Shanty, accompanied by a half-page photograph of a waitress named Donna. Donna was pictured holding a platter of some indeterminate palatables, and displaying extraordinary décolletage.

Sunday editor Ron Chapman and other staffers had originally decided not to use Donna's photo. But publisher Norman Tomlinson liked it and sent it to press. The next day, when Tomlinson's female administrative assistant suggested that too much of Donna was showing, he ordered a second run of magazines to be printed. This time around, a more modest photo of "Barbara" appeared.

The mistake, which cost an additional \$1,200 to \$2,000, occurred the same day the *Record* announced an increase in its newsstand price.

"I probably could've gotten away with it, but why stir up a hornet's nest?" says Tomlinson. "It was a question of taste. Besides, Donna thanked me for not running the photo because it didn't do her justice."

—KRIS NICHOLSON

*l'affaire* Leonard in his monthly column.

Since Wolfe's most recent book, *The Painted Word*, is about modern art, the rumor may in fact have started with a witty reader who remarked that the author should take on modern literature next. Wolfe, who complained quite cheerfully to the *Voice* in mid-October that Leonard "picked up on your fantasy and whipped it up, like a bowl of zabaglione, into an entire column," had grown more aggrieved under the strain of putting aside a project he had never begun. Why hadn't Leonard bothered to check with him? "Am I so formidable?"

—ANN MARIE CUNNINGHAM

## The Magazine for ???

*Esquire* is no longer "the magazine for men." The 40-year old subtitle has been quietly dropped—apparently swept away by the publication's desire to reach a wider audience. According to managing editor Lee Eisenberg, "Although some people thought the slogan had given the magazine an identity, the reality is that we never were 'a magazine for men.' The slogan was foolish, so it was dropped."

Foolish perhaps, but despite Eisenberg's claims, *Esquire* has continued to feature men's fashions, special sports issues, automotive spreads and photographs of nude females of tender age. Could it be that

the subtitle's departure is related to the fact that advertising pages are off 30 per cent for 1975 and the monthly's 1.2 million circulation is down 60,000 from last year?

—PAUL SHAPIRO

## Word Play

Mark Lieberman, a City Hall reporter for the *Daily News*, last month wanted to add a touch of wit to his string of stories on the city's fiscal crisis.

On a train ride from City Hall to the *Daily News*'s midtown offices on October 16, he decided he would begin the first seven paragraphs of his story with words whose first letters, when read down the page, would spell the word "default."

Resigned to this task, Lieberman told Richard Blood, night city editor, who, according to Lieberman, "didn't really think I was going to do it. But I did and it got past the night city editor and the copy editor. I don't think it has been done here in the past."

Even as the Oct. 17 four star edition was nearing press time, William Unstead, night managing editor, first spotted the word play in the three star edition. "Very clever story Mark," he remarked. Unstead didn't rearrange the paragraphs and the story ran again in the four star edition. In the final edition, however, Lieberman had too many inserts to add to the story to fool around with words. "After all," he said, "there are limitations to my cleverness."

—KEVIN L. GOLDMAN



# FINE TUNING

## Heeere's Johnny!

BY PETER SCHRAG

There are still a lot of people in this country who have never participated in a radio or television talk show—either as host, guest or as one of those muffled-voiced telephone callers (“Hello, Sunny Hills, you’re on the air”)—but their number must be dwindling rapidly. Seasons come and go, but Talk runs on forever: Heeere’s Johnny, Merv, Mike, Tam, Kup, Steve, David, Pat, Nat, Regis, Dorothy, Nancy, Barbara, Bea, Bill, Bob, Betty and maybe a thousand others, gobbling up guests, pinning a mike on them, and spitting them out during the commercials. In a typical recent week in San Francisco, I could have treated my calloused ears to Jason Robards, Florence Henderson, Paul Williams, Kaye Ballard, Freddy Fender, Percy Knauth, Sally Quinn (twice), Midge MacKenzie, Roberta Flack, Robert Moses, Anthony Sampson, John Rubino, Marilyn Patel, Shelley Winters, Maya Angelou, Orson Bean, Sonny Griffith, Alex Comfort, Truman Capote, Dick Van Dyke, Perla Meyers, Cleveland Amory, Martin Brown, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Burt Reynolds, and maybe fifty others. I still don’t know who some of these people are, and never will, but somewhere along the way I learned that Meyers is a chef who wrote a book called *The Peasant Kitchen* and that Rubino is a pumpkin sculptor.

For all that apparent variety, media talk emits a sort of constant hum in which all things are more or less equal: diets, dogs, rape, flower arrangements, the financial problems of New York City, the comeback of a half-forgotten pop singer, the marriages of a Hollywood actor, Don Rickles’ last week in Vegas (on the talk shows, people are perpetually flying in from Vegas), the new production of the local dance company, the book on Jerry Ford, the book on biofeedback, the book on money. There are, of course, the different styles and tones of the hosts—their different levels of indifference: Kup isn’t Carson, and Merv isn’t Mike, and none of them bears much resemblance to serious interviewers like Studs Terkel in Chicago or Mike Beeson in San Francisco or Harrison Salisbury when he served as moderator of the now-defunct “Behind the Lines” (or on the other hand) to those dreary people who smother the foreign press on public television. Sycophancy still reigns here and there on local outlets, fawning over last year’s primal screamer and this week’s diet doctor, while, in Carson’s studio in Burbank, the cosmetic cynicism of the three million dollar man transforms all the world’s agonies into a disposable string of one-liners. Earl Butz jokes aren’t funny to those who can’t afford the food, and welfare jokes don’t generate a lot of laughs among the poor. It is not (as in more primitive days) our prob-

Peter Schrag, a [MORE] contributing editor who has written frequently about television in recent issues, begins a regular column on broadcasting this month.



David Prestone

**‘For all the apparent variety, media talk emits a sort of constant hum in which all things are more or less equal: diet, dogs, rape, flower arrangements, the financial problems of New York, the book on Jerry Ford.’**

lems we are laughing away, the cynicism of the victim about the exploiter, it is *their* problems, comfort cutting misery down to size. The message seems clear: no need to feel guilty, everybody is ripping somebody off.

In the end, the sycophant and the cynic are the same person anyway, and the collective effect is to raise or reduce everything to the level of that hum. Even the best—the most probing, the most honorable, the most committed—are somehow contaminated by the calculated indifference of the rest. “Mr. Carson alone presides over our consciousness,” wrote John Leonard a few weeks ago in *The New York Times*. “Whereas Ed Sullivan [by way of comparison with the variety shows of the fifties] sought excuses to celebrate, Johnny Carson is crystallized cynicism.” On the night after Leonard’s piece appeared, Carson and his announcer, Ed McMahon, began their program with allusions to what the audience could only assume was a highly flattering article in that morning’s *Times*, and Carson modestly acknowledged the applause.

No need to argue that Leonard was right about Carson; Carson himself slapped him with the confirmation. Dick Cavett, the last serious challenger for the crown, was dropped by ABC because he managed too often to commit himself to his guests and subject, to value things for what they were, and thus not only to take attention from himself but to block the trivializing escapes through which Carson leads his audience. Cavett played the country boy awestruck by the new world around him; Carson is the post-industrial slicker who has the goods on everything, and who knows that the only thing that matters is appearances. TV talk now

exists in his chilling shadow.

What seems most notable about that chilling effect, however, is neither its cynicism nor its casual vulgarity (which, as in a recent Merv Griffin conversation about diets, tends to sink ever deeper into its own excremental innuendos) but the underlying emptiness which gives them rise. The big newspaper gossip columnists have nearly all been replaced by the talk shows—the most recent casualty was Joyce Haber’s Hollywood column in *The Los Angeles Times*; after mediataalk gets through with the celebrities there isn’t much for the writers. Yet the electronic replacements are not merely substitutes for people like Haber or Hedda Hopper or Louella Parsons; in embracing what purport to be serious matters in their vitiating grasp—pollution, welfare, inflation—they corrupt subjects which the print media usually restrict to the book page or to news columns or to other sections of (more or less) serious treatment. In print, society and celebrity gossip tend to remain distinct from the more pressing matters; on the talk shows they are all part of the same idiom.

There are, of course, exceptions, particularly on radio, where the word rather than the personality still tends to dominate; on television, even in the presence of the most soberly respectful host, the guest is usually an ornament for the star’s crown. The show goes on: if you don’t want to hear this palaver about the famine in Africa, just wait a few minutes and we’ll bring on the contortionist. When Ralph Nader appears on the “Tonight” show, the real beneficiary isn’t the cause of consumerism, it’s Carson. Because everything is of equal worth nothing is worth anything.

I’ve been on that circuit myself, push-

ing a couple of books in which I deeply believed, basking in the hot light of borrowed fame, yet coming away with the feeling that my own work was worth no more than that of the contortionist. A few years ago I appeared on “Kup’s Show” in Chicago with (among others) Leonard Woodcock of the United Auto Workers, a director and choreographer from the Joffrey Ballet, an Irish revolutionary and Evel Knievel. Host Irv Kupcinet interviewed each of us in turn, then expected us to sit politely while the next guest did his thing. We were permitted a few conversational intrusions, but the guest who interjected anything beyond his quota was stared down by Kup’s forbidding look: equal time, equal time. On other shows we operated by the End Chair Principle: the guests who didn’t vanish during the commercials were moved over to make room for the new arrival, trophies to be displayed in an occasional pan shot of the set. “Would you welcome please . . .” Move down, move down.

Along the way you meet the talk show junkies, an old acquaintance who assures you that his book and yours don’t compete, and that therefore it’s all right for both of you to be on the same show (I’ll say something nice about you if you say something nice about me); the feminist writer with the big book who has just taken a TV make-up course and who expects to be on the circuit for four months carrying \$60 worth of TV make-up in her suitcase; the old hand who reminds you to talk to the red lights on the camera, not to the host, to take the act away from him. You learn how to respond to irrelevant telephone calls on midnight radio shows and use them to turn attention to the Book (yet wondering all the time how someone sitting up at this hour to listen to this could ever be expected to read any book, let alone yours), and you begin to suspect that your contempt for the host and his shallow questions is matched only by his contempt for a string of writers, actors and politicians willing to run to some station in the boondocks and sit up half the night trying to get a little public attention. Yet you also persuade yourself that somehow, somewhere, the message is getting through, that all this promiscuous talking has some effect.

This is the emptiness: a service is performed—some instruction in baking or cosmetics or child care, some moral edification, some opinions on Watergate or the oil companies, a few good morsels to replace village gossip, for some a whole universe of chatter for the laundromat, perhaps even someone to call in the night with an opinion—yet the essence of the service is to fill the awful void with the sound of the human voice and the reflected glow of even the most tarnished glamor. We all meet in those studios the people on the way up, the people on the way down, the people going nowhere. But the audience isn’t supposed to know that, isn’t told about the differences and isn’t encouraged to distinguish between the genuine and the phony. Quite the contrary. Because we are on we are all celebrities.

A few months ago, Eric Sevareid of (continued on page 29)



# First time in book form: H.L. Mencken blisters the press A Gang of Pecksniffs

AND OTHER COMMENTS ON NEWSPAPER  
PUBLISHERS, EDITORS AND REPORTERS  
BY H.L. MENCKEN

*Selected, Edited and Introduced with a Profile of Mencken as  
Newsmen by Theo Lippmann, Jr.*

A few years before he died, H. L. Mencken wrote to a friend that "as I look back over a misspent life, I find myself more and more convinced that I had more fun doing news reporting than in any other enterprise. It is really the life of kings."

With Mencken, newspapering was a lifelong love affair. He was a giant on the *Baltimore Sun* for more than 40 years, and he had edited another Baltimore paper before joining the *Sun*. Over the years he held down almost every editorial and reporting job in the business. He was a confidant of publishers. When he died in 1956, the *Sun's* obituary identified him as "newspaper man, critic, wit and Baltimore's best-known writer."

Now Theo Lippman brings together just about everything Mencken ever wrote on the Fourth Estate. Only one piece has appeared in a book before.

The pages bristle. Mencken spared no one, least of all his colleagues—as Franklin Roosevelt was shrewd enough to understand. FDR, as part of his running skirmish with the press, roasted them mercilessly at the 1934 Gridiron Club dinner. Only toward the end of his speech did he reveal that he was quoting from Mencken—at that time FDR's severest critic.

Mr. Lippman contributes a lively profile of Mencken as newsmen, with emphasis on the Tennessee Monkey Trial and his irreverent forays into presidential politics.

Following in his hero's footsteps, Mr. Lippman is now an editorial writer with the *Baltimore Sun*. He is the author of *Spiro Agnew's America* and co-author of *Muskie*.



## A TOUCH OF BITTERS: MENCKEN ON NEWSPAPERS

- The press and the New Deal
- The *New York Times*
- Newspaper morals
- The art of leading the vulgar
- The first requirement of a good headline
- Government propaganda
- Hearst and his critics
- Tabloids
- Codes of ethics in journalism
- Scripps-Howard and the other chains
- Editorial pages
- Joseph Pulitzer
- Phony news
- Press clubs
- Mencken's own  
*Baltimore Evening Sun*
- Schools of journalism
- Dana and the *New York Sun*
- The journalist as professional
- The Newspaper Guild
- The newsmen: his central job
- Objectivity
- The critics of journalism

## Mencken on American newspapers

"The average American newspaper, especially of the so-called better sort, has the intelligence of a Baptist evangelist, the courage of a rat, the fairness of a Prohibitionist boob-bumper, the information of a high-school janitor, the taste of a designer of celluloid valentines, and the honor of a police-station lawyer. Ask me to name so many as five papers that are clearly above this average . . . and when I have made it up and the names are read by the bailiff, a wave of snickers will pass over the assembly after nearly every one. These snickers will come from newspaper men who know a shade more about the matter than I do."

### (MORE)

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# FURTHERMORE

## Nixon's Defenders Do Have A Case

BY NOAM CHOMSKY

The punishment of Richard Nixon for his misdeeds was described in the national press as "a stunning vindication of our constitutional system." Particularly stunning was the performance of the media, which brought the tyrant to bay in a remarkable display of courage, demonstrating their firm commitment to civil liberties and freedom from ideological controls. Nixon's few defenders took a rather different stand. In their view, Nixon had broken little new ground in harassment of political opponents or misuse of the FBI. The attack on him, they alleged, was politically motivated, and the solemn invocation of high principle, a hypocritical pretense.

Such pleas were dismissed with contempt. Suppose, nevertheless, that we try to put them to the test. It is easy to imagine relevant evidence. Suppose that during the period of the Watergate exposures, other information had come to light concerning acts of state repression on a scale far exceeding any charges levelled against Nixon, acts in which earlier Administrations were also implicated. Suppose further that we were to discover that this story, while not suppressed, aroused little interest or concern during the period when efforts were devoted to driving Nixon from office for his lesser offenses. Then it would be fair to conclude that Nixon's defenders have a good case.

History is rarely kind enough to provide us with anything like a "controlled experiment." In this case, in fact, it has virtually done so. In December 1973, Carl Stern of NBC obtained the release of documentary evidence on the FBI campaigns through the 1960s to undermine and disrupt legal activities directed to social change or protest against state policy. In subsequent months, while public attention was riveted on Watergate, much additional information was released on court order in civil suits. Still more was provided by former government agents and others.

In comparison with these revelations, the whole Watergate affair was a tea party. The evidence now available, though fragmentary, reveals a systematic campaign of disruption, intimidation, instigation of violence, and terror, initiated under the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations. The Justice Department claims that superiors were not informed. Perhaps so, but we may still observe that officials who had even a passing familiarity with FBI practices had a responsibility to determine how the bureau was operating under their authority.

The story of the FBI campaigns, carried further under Nixon, was not censored. The assiduous researcher who

Noam Chomsky, professor of modern languages and linguistics at M.I.T., adapted this essay from his introduction to COINTELPRO - The FBI's Secret War On Political Freedom, just published by Pathfinder Press.



Victor Juhasz

**"COINTELPRO and other illegal FBI operations under Kennedy and Johnson were incomparably more serious than anything charged against Nixon. But they aroused scant interest in the organs of American liberalism."**

knew where to look could put much of it together; Chicago newspapers, for example, discuss local atrocities in detail. Among the liberal journals, *The Nation* was, to my knowledge, unique in giving detailed coverage in 1973-4, as did pacifist and left-wing sources (e.g., *Liberation*, *Ramparts*, *the Militant*); the left, of course, did not have to await the documentation, any more than the peasants of Laos had to learn from *The New York Times* that their villages were being bombed. After the Watergate battle was won, the national press and liberal journals did express some editorial concern. But an investigation of the record will show that COINTELPRO (counterintelligence programs) and other illegal FBI operations, undertaken to "expose, disrupt, and otherwise neutralize the activities" of designated enemies of the state, while incomparably more serious than anything charged in the Congressional Articles of Impeachment or other denunciations of Nixon, aroused scant interest and little concern, specifically, in the organs of American liberalism that were so agitated over the latest tax trickery or tape erasure.

Ergo: Nixon's defenders do have a case.

The political meaning of the FBI programs is revealed in the secret memorandum that set a "Disruption Program" in motion against the Socialist Workers Party in October 1961. The grounds offered were these: the SWP "has, over the past several years, been openly espousing its line on a local and national basis through running candidates for public office and strongly directing and/or supporting such causes as Castro's Cuba and integration problems arising in the South." It has also been in contact with "international

Trotskyite groups stopping short of open and direct contact with these groups." No criminal action is alleged. In a class action suit, the SWP charges that "disruption" over the years included burglaries, attacks on SWP offices to terrorize campaign workers, bombing and burning of offices, and various other forms of harassment. I will not review the evidence. Rather, I want to direct attention to the motivation for the program: to block legal political activity that departs from orthodoxy, to disrupt opposition to state policy, and to undermine the struggle for civil rights. These basic commitments persisted through the Nixon Administration. Thus in early 1969, the FBI succeeded in driving a Black minister from a civil rights organization in the South, under COINTELPRO. FBI harassment of the SWP had been documented through 1973, long after COINTELPRO was officially discontinued.

The FBI programs were modelled on earlier efforts to disrupt the Communist Party. Organizations "targeted" included the Puerto Rico independence movement, the SWP, the Ku Klux Klan, "black nationalists," and finally the entire "New Left" (May 1968). Agents were directed to "inspire action in instances where circumstances warrant," to "disrupt or neutralize" these organizations, and to use "established local news media contacts" to "ridicule and discredit" black organizations. There is evidence that among the actions "inspired" were considerable campus violence, arson, bombing of buildings, attempted murder, killing after entrapment, financing and arming of right-wing terrorist groups that carried out fire-bombings, burglaries and shootings with the knowledge of the FBI. Whether these actions were "in-

spired" under COINTELPRO we do not know, but it hardly matters.

The most shocking story concerns the murder of Black Panther leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark by Chicago police in December 1969. There is substantial evidence in subpoenaed depositions and documents that the FBI was directly involved in this gestapo-style political assassination, although the courts have so far refused to permit the issue to be raised in the civil suit filed by the families of the victims.

A top secret *Special Report* of the combined intelligence agencies (FBI, CIA, DIA, NSA) in June 1970 gives some insight into the government effort to destroy the Black Panther Party. The report cites polls indicating that 25 per cent of the black population had great respect for the Panthers, 43 per cent among those under 21. The full details of these programs will probably never be known. What has already been documented far outweighs in significance the Watergate and its aftermath.

There has been—and will be—no independent investigation of the FBI programs of repression from 1960. One indication of the character of these programs is given in a survey by Gary Marx (*American Journal of Sociology*—September 1974). He notes that among 34 cases of infiltration for which he was able to gain some information, two involved right-wing groups and the remainder, campus groups, "predominantly white peace groups and/or economic groups," and Black and Chicano groups. Furthermore, in two-thirds of the cases "the specious activities appear to have gone beyond passive information gathering to active provocation." Other sources indicate that the attack on dissent was a major function of the FBI in this period, as previously.

Though partially exposed during the Watergate period and incomparably more serious than anything charged against Nixon, the FBI programs of repression—instituted under the Democratic Administrations—were virtually ignored during this period and have been barely discussed since. I have discovered—and others may verify—that much of the most significant information is unknown even to generally well-informed observers and that the scale and character of the programs is rarely appreciated. Note finally that the Justice Department has decided not to prosecute anyone in connection with these activities.

Shortly after the "Saturday night massacre," Attorney General Elliot Richardson explained that the "fatal flaw" of the Nixon Administration was its proclivity to perceive critics and opposition as "enemies" and to "adopt tactics used against an enemy" in countering such criticism. In fact, Nixon did break the rules of the political game: he concentrated political power too narrowly, demeaned the office of the Presidency by petty chicanery, and attacked the political center with tactics designed for true political enemies, such as the New Left, the Black Panthers, the SWP, or others who depart from the narrow political consensus. For these crimes,



Nixon was hounded from office.

The lesson of Watergate seems clear. American liberalism and the corporate media will defend themselves from attack. But their spirited acts of self-defense are not to be construed as a commitment to civil liberties or democratic principle, despite noble and self-serving rhetoric. Rather, they demonstrate a commitment to the principle that power must not be threatened. Those who control the economy, political life, and the system of conventional doctrine must be safeguarded from the "disruption" that is designed for those who raise a serious challenge to ruling ideology or state policy or established privilege. An "enemies list" including corporate executives, media figures and government intellectuals is an obscenity and a horror. The involvement of the national political police in the assassination of Black Panther leaders, in contrast, barely deserves comment in the national press.

The Watergate affair demonstrates the continued subservience of the media to ruling powers and ideology. The same was true generally of the Vietnam war. The liberal press turned against the war at about the time that conservative business circles did and for the same reasons. Its opposition was "pragmatic," like that of the "intellectual elite": we could not win at an acceptable cost. To the end, the liberal press generally described the war as a conflict between North and South Vietnam, hewing close to the official propaganda line. Media doves joined most liberal intellectuals in protesting that the U.S. was defending South Vietnam in an exercise of misplaced benevolence. The war was "a mistake," a case of good motives transmuted (mysteriously) into bad policy. The plain fact that the U.S. was engaged in direct aggression in South Vietnam in the early 1960s after the failure of the massive repression of earlier years, and that its murderous attack then spilled over to neighboring regions, has been consistently ignored, again, with a few honorable exceptions.

I believe that adequate documentation is available, and has been presented, to support these conclusions. None of this serves to absolve Nixon and his law-and-order cohorts. Rather, it indicates that the pretensions of his persecutors can be largely dismissed.

To be properly understood, all of this should be placed in its historical context. The repression after World War I received the overwhelming support of the press until it perceived a threat to its own interests. The same was true of business circles. The record was replayed after World War II, during what is mislabeled as the "McCarthy era." The basic liberal doctrine was expressed by Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, upholding the Smith Act. He argued that the clear-and-present-danger doctrine was inapplicable to "Communist plotting," for if the government were to await "imminent action," it would be "too late." It is hardly surprising that the beginnings of protest and organization in the early 1960s should have set the apparatus of repression into operation once again. Nor is it surprising that American liberalism often looked the other way until the repression struck home under Nixon, and that even then, indignation was focused on crimes that are insignificant in comparison with what was revealed in exactly the same period. ■

## Fine Tuning

(continued from page 26)

CBS made a speech in which he took a swipe at critics who suggest that television is damaging conversation. "Nonsense," said Seavareid, "TV programs have stimulated billions of conversations that otherwise would not have occurred." It seems almost inevitable, however, that talk shows which deny or accept all things with the same indifference can teach only one thing, and that is the value and legitimacy of the form itself. Those people are something—the actors, writers, gymnasts, singers—because they are there in that studio, are on the air, and have thus been certified as people of accomplishment, influence or talent. This is what makes junkies—the need for that fix. But how are we certified? What the show celebrates isn't the accomplishment or the talent or the intelligence, despite all pretense to the contrary; what it celebrates is the star and the certifying medium. It celebrates itself. The very informality of TV talk (though often more feigned than real) tends to emphasize the medium rather than the content. Drama, news and sports, however trivial, violent or silly, generally focus on some substance (though people like Cosell and the happy talkers are beginning to intrude even there); that Chancellor or Cronkite are also "personalities" created by media research and puffed by network promotion seems to me an evil incidental. But in TV talk the personality—and the medium—are the essence. I don't know what people do to get studio tickets for Carson or Douglas, but in Cincinnati the housewives wait for a year and a half to be admitted to Bob Braun's daily "50-50 Club." His station, WLWT-TV, says it could get enough requests to fill the 250 studio seats for the next six years. They don't come to hear the visiting guest, perhaps not even to be near the star, but to touch the medium, to have their faces on the screen in that instant when the camera pans the audience, to be on. This may be the ultimate end of those billions of conversations. TV talk teaches that everything outside the view of the camera is worthless. The camera is everything. The problem isn't unique to Squeaky Fromme or Sarah Jane Moore, nor does the fault lie in our stars. ■

## Letters

(continued from page 3)

with him. The story might have been less "juicy" from the Bellotti angle, but at least it would have been accurate. Mr. Fisher might even have spelled my name correctly.

—J. Ronald Milavsky  
Director, Social Research  
NBC  
New York, N.Y.

**Editors reply:** We apologize to correspondent Milavsky for misspelling his name. As for the "serious misrepresentation" of his survey's findings, our reporter tried to contact all three networks about the proposed ban; only NBC did not return his telephone calls. Since then, Milavsky has declined to supply [MORE] with a copy of the as-yet unpublished study to determine whether his charges are accurate. However, in an abstract of the study, published in the *Journal of Marketing* in January 1975, William S. Ruben,

NBC's vice president for research and corporate planning, writes, "We found the more drug advertising the boys were exposed to on television, the more they used the proprietary drugs advertised on television. However, this relationship is a weak one. . . . Second, we found an inverse relationship between exposure to drug advertising on television and use of illegal drugs." If these are in fact the conclusions of the study, it would have been more accurate to say that teenagers watching drug ads may use those drugs advertised but that this connection is not a strong one.

## Sunrise

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These have been published by the Sunrise Books Division of E.P. Dutton. In February, 1976, we will be publishing in hardcover *The Rights of Reporters*, along with *The Rights of Hospital Patients* and *The Rights of Gay People*. Any of these titles can be ordered direct from Dutton if they can't be found in the local bookstores. This information might help satisfy the objection you made to Avon's "lack of concern about the rights of readers."

—Marian Skedgell  
Director, Sunrise Books  
New York, N.Y.



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**[MORE]**

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